



# The Story Man's First Writes Roger Barkley

VISIT...

LANZAROTE  
*Caliente*.COM

# **The Story Man's First Writes**

**by  
Roger Barkley**

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The Story Man's First Writes by Roger Barkley

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## In Loving Memory

Roger Barkley  
1936 - 1997

*This book is dedicated to the memory of Roger Barkley,  
our favorite Story Man, who did not live to see this book project completed,  
but who lives on through its pages, attaining his goal to bring  
the spirit of gentleness and humor into all of our hearts forevermore.*

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PHOTO BY JOHN TORREY



## FOREWORD

I'm from the old school of radio, where you turned on the set, waited for the tubes to slowly heat up and brighten, and as the light on the dial got brighter the magic began. All the wonderful world of imagination would come streaming out of the three inch speaker. The afternoon was a strict schedule of Stella Dallas, Lum And Abner, Lorenzo Jones and his Wife Belle, Tom Mix, The Lone Ranger, and of course Captain Midnight. There were no million dollar sets to view, but there were priceless locations mentioned that you could arrange or decorate as you saw fit. Sunday was a day when very little was said in the family from five o'clock on. The Shadow, Gang Busters, Fred Allen, Jack Benny, and other favorites took over the duties of entertaining you. I remember we actually laughed out loud at the antics of the great comics as they bombarded us with wonderful family humor. The radio was a member of the family. You never had to fear that it was going to offend you. It was there to entertain you with quality programs and as far as I was concerned, it always did.

When I came to Hollywood to try my wares in the business of show, all my radio favorites made the journey with me. But I also found new radio companions to entertain me. Lohman and Barkley rode to work with me every day while I was doing *McHale's Navy*. They jumped in the front seat with me as I rushed to the *Carol Burnett Show*. They were the topic of conversation every morning. If you didn't listen to them on the way to work, you were pretty much at a loss for conversation around the coffee maker because everybody relived the antics of the "Guys" as soon as they got to work.

Unlike the talk shows today, Lohman and Barkley didn't just pass the time filling the air with minutia. They brought marvelous characters to life with wild antics and humorous approaches to that day's news. If you happened to miss one of their classic moments there was always someone to make an attempt to recreate the moment with their own interpretation.

Roger was kind enough to join me one year for *The Tim Conway Celebrity Golf Tournament for the United Cerebral Palsy Foundation*. We sat on the first tee and spent five straight hours talking to the golfers in the middle of their back swing as they teed off in the tournament. He was hilarious and we went on to spend the next twenty five years doing the same thing every year. Most tournaments have trouble filling the slots with golfers, but this one was always over-sold and was filled with the biggest names in show business. It was the fun event of the year, thanks to Roger.

I listened to Roger make the transition to KABC Radio and he continued to entertain the audience with the sharpest of humor edges. And I listened as he left the air because the station manager thought it would be creative to fire Roger and replace him with



someone who had a younger approach to humor. To the station manager's credit, it was creative. It created an enormous slide in the ratings and a huge hole in the creative humor level during the drive time entertainment hours.

Roger was a kind, giving, generous man, as was his comedy. Roger never stood in front of a brick wall and shouted four letter words at the audience. Roger was intelligent and his observations reflected that quality. Roger looked around at the public, saw the humor in life, recorded it in his memory, and then gently passed it on to his audience. Enjoy the finding he has gathered in this book. He will rekindle memories of times that were slightly better than they are today. Enjoy the journey.

Tim Conway



ILLUSTRATION BY ANGELA BARKLEY

## INTRODUCTION

Let me put it succinctly. I love words! Words like, “succinctly”. As one who has been in broadcasting for over 40 years, I value words, correctly pronounced and well-written, that tell a story.

Everyone is fascinated by words. We share the thrill of a baby’s first, and quote the last utterances of the famous. Some of whom became famous only because of their last spoken words.

I define *spoken* word, with an assist from Noah Webster, as, “linguistic forms.....inflectional elements.....articulate sounds”. In *written* discourse, those words “.....appear between spaces and a punctuation mark”.

The Story Man’s First Writes is, for the moment, the latter; organized into literary compositions about things of universal and common human interest, as told by **The Story Man**.

This is a book that will appeal to anyone, anywhere who cares about anything. It’s for those interested in life’s unexpected twists, routine experiences, disturbing concerns, and those with a mutual understanding of each other’s desire to make the best of what we get - and give the best to all who share in our lives.

The Story Man shares the thrill, the excitement, the sheer terror of what it is to be the father of a cute cop in a dangerous city and, at the same time, the father of a fledgling flyer in the crowded skies. The nightmare of waking in the morning to hear on the radio that, “during the night, in Hollywood, a small airplane crashed into a police car”. That’s a true one, and demonstrates the power of the subconscious mind as recounted by The Story Man.

For further exposition, The Story Man, himself, is deserving of a story. He rose, unexpectedly, from the ashes of a tale gone sour. Understand, please, I have had a reputation for many, many years of being an effective public speaker, master of ceremonies and sharer of personal experiences. On this particular occasion I was relating a story to a large assemblage of radio colleagues over lunch one sunny day in a “trendy Hollywood eatery”. The story was short and true. My knowledge of its details were sketchy at best.

However, confident in my abilities, I started, hesitantly, and it flattened-out from there. I was too committed to stop and so I sped along toward a very weak finish, at best, and no finish at all, if I didn’t think of something, fast. Well, it became apparent to my audience, at the same time it became apparent to me, that I was petering-out, mid-story. I tried desperately to reach any kind of punch line, just to end my misery. The audience, fully aware of my discomfort, sat staring in rapt attention, wholly absorbed in every word. Finally, head bowed, with a dismissing wave of my hand, I admitted defeat and was forced to conclude with a barely audible, “Ah, forget it”. With that, the room erupted with far more laughter at my failed attempt, than would have greeted a successful telling of the story. One of those laughing hardest finally pulled himself together enough to observe, “Well aren’t you just the story man!” It was a declaration, not a question. And it stuck.

At that time I was co-host of a morning radio show, **The Ken and Barkley Company**, on KABC in Los Angeles. In that capacity, I could usually be counted on to share a story about a personal remembrance from my many and varied life-experiences. After the debacle over lunch, whenever, in the course of the program, I started sharing a real-life tale, syrupy music would play and I’d be introduced as, The Story Man. It became a funny, semi-regular piece of radio schtick. But my stories, no matter the content, were, forevermore, to suffer from the hokiness of the presentation. I became The Story Man who became a parody of himself. Me.

I must say, I have had the pleasure and opportunity in recent years to contribute as The Story Man, with written words “between spaces and a punctuation mark”, in a local publication, **The La Cañada Flintridge Magazine\***.

It is named for the California community in which it is published and in which my wife and I raised the cop and the pilot. It is also the community to which I further committed when, together with a partner, I became highly involved in the restaurant business. And I mean, Business! Ten restaurants grew from the first "Barkley". This adventure, as restaurateur, has expanded further The Story Man's store of stories.

In the years since my youth as a farmer, trumpet-player, football center/linebacker (we went both ways in those days), and grave-digger (yes), in Odebolt, Iowa, I have worked on radio in Minnesota, Utah, Texas, Colorado and California. I had a dream as a 13 year-old, when I decided that radio would be my life.

I imagined calling it a successful career if I could make it to a radio station in Des Moines, by the time I was 40. Somehow, Des Moines radio has been able to survive those 20 years since my 40th, without me. I never made it to my birth state's Capitol city.

Having now admitted my age, The Story Man will share what it's like to be unexpectedly fired from one's life's work at the age of 60. It's a profound loss of identity, and the ramifications are far-reaching, beginning with the moment you get home and tell your family you've been "terminated". Being a public figure, the embarrassment of your demise is not kept private. It becomes news and, in my case, was reported for several days in headlines and follow up stories. There is the constant reminder, every morning when you awaken and realize, after all these years, "there's no place to go".

Most of the years have been on radio and on television in Southern California. Those years, in this place, have provided opportunities to perform and socialize with celebrities from all walks of life. Chances are, if I haven't met them in person, I've had occasion to interview them on matters personal, professional or political. The Story Man was there, too. He'll share his take on these encounters.

There was the time that radio and TV legends, **Lohman and Barkley** (1962-1986), were booked to perform for four ladies playing Bridge at home. That was only a very few years before a performance on the **Ed Sullivan Show**. It was that appearance that secured, for Lohman and Barkley, the replacement program on CBS for Ed Sullivan. The deal was signed at the Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel. But then, something happened....Again, The Story Man was there.

Those Lohman and Barkley years, nearly a quarter century, were without a doubt, the highlight of a long and satisfying career. In addition to the radio successes, there

were nightclub appearances (Cocoanut Grove and Playboy Club in Hollywood) movie and television performances (with back-to-back Emmy Awards for a Lohman and Barkley Variety Show), in addition to an NBC daytime game show (Name Droppers). There was a nationally syndicated Variety/Talk Show and the game show, “Bedtime Stories” that was banned in Boston. The Story Man knows the details.

With all that The Story Man writes about Roger Barkley, this could be grounds for a first-ever lawsuit over an unauthorized autobiography.

From humble beginnings to a humbling end, the radio road has been more smooth than bumpy. More straight than crooked. More sugar than vineg.....well, you get the idea. It’s also been a myriad of experiences with which everyone can identify. From the first job, to the first child, to the first firing. It has been an adventure worthy of chronicling by The Story Man.

From a briefing in the Nixon White House, two days after the break-in at Watergate, to the painful mountain-top decision to end a 25 year partnership, it will all be told with warmth, humor and honesty by, You-Know-Who.

Other stories of significance have to do with world-wide travels, by train, plane, car and ship. Observations about people and places are a Story Man staple.

Grayhair, grandfatherhood, and now, the recent diagnosis of Tinnitus (constant, incurable ringing in the ears), are the daily reminders of a Grand Plan, beyond the ability of anyone, so far at least, to survive on this planet past a certain, finite, span of years. That reality in his own life prompts The Story Man to share his Mother’s profound sense of her own mortality in a moving tribute. He writes, also, of being his Father’s son and of his own years as a parent. And then, there’s a loving tribute to a Doberman.

As we were once reminded on television, “there are a million stories in the naked city”. The producers of that program knew that honest, well-crafted stories, even stories about those of whom we know little or nothing, can be identified with, by the masses.

And so, without further adieu, The Story Man’s First Writes.

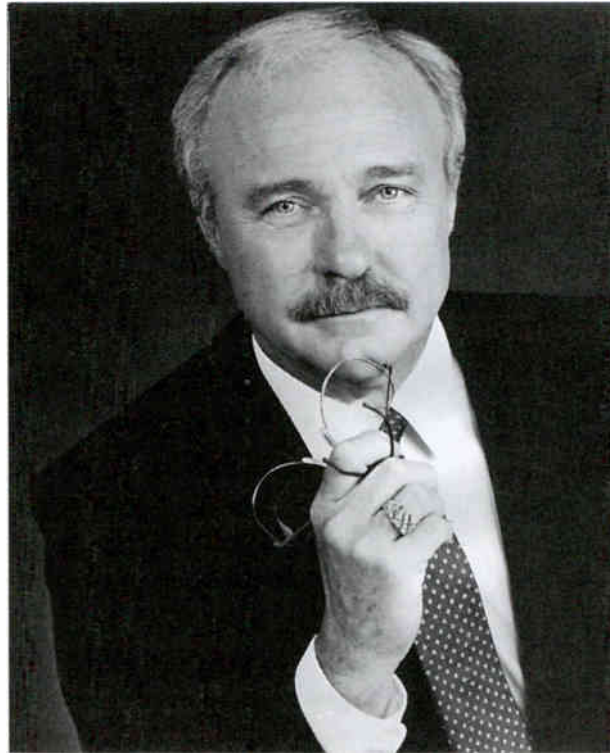
***Roger Barkley***

*\*Publisher’s Note: Throughout this book, references are made to the Flintridge Shopper and the La Cañada Flintridge Magazine. Back in 1991 when I first asked Roger to write as The Story Man, the publication was an advertising periodical called the Flintridge Shopper. Later, that enterprise grew into the La Cañada Flintridge Magazine, and Roger continued to grace our pages with his wonderful presence, and his gifts of wit, charm and humor.*

*Are you willing to pay the price, my child,  
To attain the goal which you seek?  
Do you know how rough the path may become,  
Each step how increasingly steep?  
Have you the will and desire to win,  
And the courage to struggle on?  
Will victory be won and you'll stand at last  
On the pinnacle of fame?  
Will you then look back with regret in your heart  
Because you sacrificed much?  
To write your name, large on the page of time?  
Or will it be worth the cost?*

*Ruth Barkley*





### *A Preface*

Ah, the “pinnacle of fame”, when achieved through “will” and “desire”, may well be worth the cost. “Paying the price to attain the goal”, is one thing, but, as famed publisher, Horace Greeley (1811-1872), noted: “Fame is an accident”. Kato Kalin, remember him? reached “the pinnacle of fame” without a demonstration of either “courage” or “struggle”. He just happened to be the occupant of O.J. Simpson’s guest house.

For most of us, fame, to whatever degree, isn’t so easy. Depending on the profession, one person’s “pinnacle of fame” may be another person’s idea of just a good job. A successful 35-years on Los Angeles radio, with national television shows, major nightclub appearances, and a couple of movie roles, was, if not the “pinnacle”, certainly far more “fame” than a boy from Odebolt, Iowa, might reasonably expect. The Story Man recounts the triumphs and traumas of each steep step on the climb to the “pinnacle?”! The triumphs include a 25-year personal and professional relationship that one day fell apart. The traumas include the decision to end it. Lives end, babies are born, pets die and *The Story Man* is here to write about it.

An accomplished pianist can meditate over the keyboard of a piano and compose melodies and lyrics that capture a mood. These “lyrics” have been collected over the



keyboard of a personal computer. A lyric, according to the dictionary, often “expresses spontaneous direct feelings”. Here are musings, at an IBM, that are hardly comparable to a musician’s compositions at a Steinway, but what is written is “spontaneous” and, certainly, “directly felt”.

The late lyricist, Allan Jay Lerner, wrote: “A lyric without its musical clothes is a scrawny creature and should never be allowed to parade naked across the printed page.”

If Frederick Loewe could musically clothe Lerner’s naked lyrics, then perhaps you should hum a Brigadoon tune as you sample the pages that follow. An excursion through a collection of miscellaneous reminiscences, reflections, observations and conclusions. It is anthology, biography, genealogy and geography. It is an accumulation of literary pieces about a career, and a family, and where they came from. These are The Story Man’s First Writes.

***Roger Barkley***



ILLUSTRATION BY ANGELA BARKLEY

*The Story Man* was first brought to the written page in October of 1993. As has been written elsewhere in this volume, he had gained some notoriety on radio with occasional appearances on the Ken and Barkley Company on KABC in Los Angeles. *The Story Man* started out as an observer of current events who relates them to past personal experiences.

The first writings were exactly like that. Halloween was coming and....

### The Story Man Remembers Halloweens Past

Many years ago we didn't even think about Christmas until after Thanksgiving. Now it appears that Labor Day's labors include setting up displays for four months of holiday retail sales. Coming soon? Fireworks and Santa Claus!

When our kids were little kids I was amazed at the excitement Halloween generated in their little kid lives. Some of my favorite family pictures are of Chris and Angela, in their costumes, all excited about a nighttime walk around our neighborhood, accompanied by their flashlight-wielding Father.

I told them that when I was their age I didn't have time for such high jinks and folderol. I was already working in the Iowa cornfields late into the night. I was walking six miles to school, uphill - both ways! - in the snow! - barefoot! My everyday attire looked like a scary costume. And what good would it have done to go once a year for candy to a neighbor's house? We were already going to them, once a week, for warm, nourishing soup and table scraps. I exaggerated a little bit to get their sympathy. I've since been told it worked!

I must admit that their continuing enthusiasm for Halloween encouraged me to get costumes and disgusting masks in preparation for a big night out of *trick-or-treating*. I think the kids dressed up, too.

Ah, but seriously folks, I remember one year my boy, Chris, wanted to be Count Dracula. He had a top hat and cane and canine teeth. Actually, that combination came in handy every Halloween...until the Orthodontist ruined it. Do I have to explain this stuff? See, there's a joke in there someplace. I think it's the "orthodontist fixed his canine teeth" line.

Anyway, this particular year the homemade cape of his costume was a little too long and the heel of his shoe kept getting caught in the hem. The dear little guy would take a step, catch his heel, fall down, lose his hat, drop his cane and mutter something like, "doggone the dadrat and the stinkin' stupid cape, anyway". At some point that night he decided to be a capeless Dracula. In subsequent years he went for the basic skeleton look.

Meanwhile, Angie, who liked to wear worn-out shoes; unbecoming, ill-fitting, long and saggy t-shirts, and torn pants to elementary school, would dress up for Halloween. Whether it was the year of the goblin, the ghost or the witch (which required the use of Chris' hand-me-down cape) she'd always insist that everything about her be neat and very feminine. The neighbors, of course, would always recognize her perfectly attired little body, but I bet her school teachers wouldn't have.

Then, of course, too soon they decide they don't need their flashlight-wielding Dad to accompany them anymore. They can do the door-to-door stuff on their own. I hated it when that happened. But, their Mom and I would send them off with a "Please be careful! And have a good time."

After that comes the "raise-a-little-hell" phase, when they'd aim sticky stuff from aerosol cans onto street signs. With their advancing teen-age years came less menacing activities, such as Halloween costume parties at a friend's house.

Then, on a memorable Halloween eve around that same period of time, they said to their Mom and Dad, “Let us stay home and pass out the goodies. You two go out and enjoy the night.” And so they sent us away. But, with a little advice that they’d heard from somebody...somewhere, “Just please be careful! And have a good time.”

A Halloween “night off” was never as much fun as being with those two little kids, in their two little costumes, growing more bold with each doorbell they rang. I’d stand in the shadows with a flashlight in my hand, a smile on my lips and tears in my eyes, as I heard those two little voices laugh with such delight as they cried out - “Trick or Treat!”

Oh, I miss that a lot.

*The Story Man*



ILLUSTRATION BY ANGELA BARKLEY

*As a little kid I had the perfect pet. A dog named Snooks. He just up and disappeared one Saturday night and it broke my heart. Later, there was a special little guy named Happy, who certainly was, and he brightened our lives for 15 years.*

**And Then There Was Damien  
This is the story of  
A Dog And His Man**

The Doberman came to our house as a back seat passenger, standing directly behind the driver's seat, panting and drooling down my neck, as I drove him from Manhattan Beach to La Cañada. I've had many pets in my life but never one with the reputation of a Doberman Pinscher. That reputation, of course, is that they'd rather bite your neck than pant and drool down it.

It was a rainy afternoon in the spring of 1982. When he and I arrived at our house I decided to first escort him to the back yard, and then tell the family that we had a "temporary guest".

I told them the story of a friend finding the dog, naming him Damien, not being

able to care for him, offering him to me and my accepting, as an “interim” custodian, until other arrangements could be made for this perfect specimen of a truly beautiful, healthy one-year-old black and tan Dobie. Those “other arrangements” were never made.

Since there was the threat of light rain that evening, I decided that Damien should have access to the indoors from the back yard so I opened the sliding glass doors into my downstairs office just wide enough for our new guest to be able to get in from the elements. That done, we went out for an early dinner. When we returned, a couple of hours later, I found Damien, standing at my new sofa...eating it. He gave me an innocent am-I-doing-something-wrong-look as he stood straddling what remained of a large cushion from which came the stuffing that was hanging from his mouth.

In an immediate show of you’d-better-damn-well-learn-who-is-in-charge-in-this-house, I chased him out of the room into the back yard, up the stairs across the patio and into the dirt side yard that dead-ended into a closed gate. When I got him to that point, and he realized there was no escape, he turned, firmly planted his legs, lowered his head, bared his teeth and growled a low and menacing Doberman growl. Even at his **young age** he knew that his defense was no longer flight, **but attack**. At my **middle age** I realized that he was not going to just give up and cower in he corner, but do what nature equipped him to do to survive. Fight back! As our eyes met in that tense instant, I tried to sound as if I was the master. “Damien”, I said, “let’s be friends...and **please don’t kill me!**”

He seemed to immediately understand that if he would not eat the furniture, I would not chase him. And I immediately understood that even if he did eat the furniture, **I would not chase him!** And so, with that unspoken agreement, we became the best of friends.

Eleven years later, on April 21, 1993, we took him to the veterinarian’s office to see if they could get him to eat, which he’d not done, except for a little nibble now and then, for a couple of days. The quick diagnosis was that Damie’s heart was showing its age and he should stay as the vet’s guest for some further tests and observation. The hope, of course, was that his appetite would return, his heart would be medicated and “other alternatives”, for this special member of the family, could be avoided.

Shortly after he came into our home in 1982, I learned that a Dobie’s life, if he’s lucky, is only 9 or 10 years. As it turned out we were the lucky ones. For eleven years Damien’s very being was a reminder that “**nothing is forever**”. Precious families, caring friends, lovely sights, beautiful sounds...and the Damiens of the world...are life’s great pleasures and irreplaceable treasures.

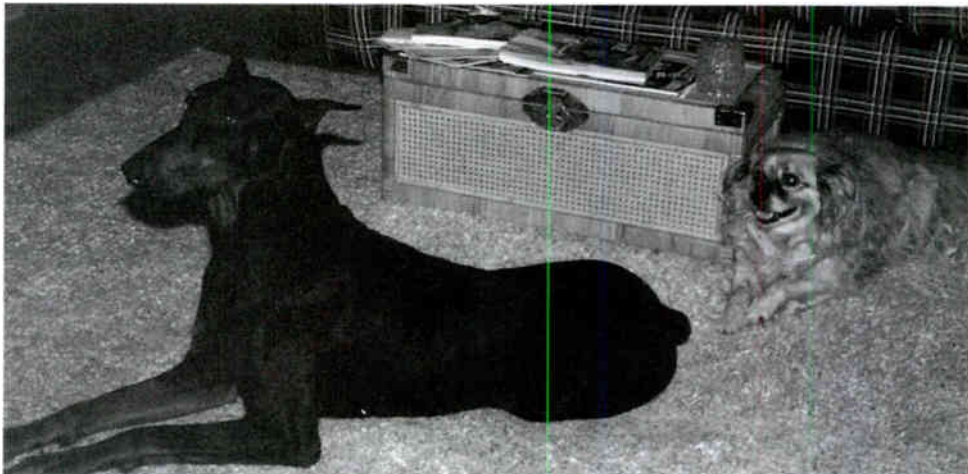


With his collar of clinking i.d.'s he couldn't sneak up on you if he wanted to, but to strangers he was an intimidating Doberman presence. On the other hand, our cat could sneak up on things, including little birds, that he would frequently bring into the house. On several occasions Damien was seen cradling a deceased bird in his Doberman jaws as he would gently remove it from the house and place it in an outdoor flower pot. Then, to finish the job, he'd paw at the dirt until he'd covered the bird's remains.

Day or night some sound or scent from outside would prompt Damie to go on an excursion up and down and around the back and side yards of the house. He'd prowl and protect his domain with an occasional time-out to sit in the sun and enjoy the view.

Damien loved being in the company of his family. Wherever in the house we were, so too, usually, was "Dame". If the front door was used to get a look at the day, he would have to take a look as well.

At the sight of his leash he would prance and fidget until it was attached to his collar for the walk to the car and the ride to whatever the destination. He even enjoyed his visits to the Veterinarian. He'd point his ears and wag his cropped tail all the way to the Doctor's door. Those visits, sadly, were becoming more frequent, and in recent rides, he had to have help getting his ample body, and arthritic hind legs, onto the back seat of the car.



Through all the years his predictable habits were part of the fun we all shared. After the evening meal at his doggie dish outside the kitchen door, he'd join us for the evening ritual of pestering for more "chewies" than were probably good for him. As he



aged, his big Doberman teeth and jaws could only handle the smaller and softer “puppy chewy” of his youth.

From the very beginning of our relationship I assumed that we, the humans, were dictating the routine of our household. Now I know it was Damien who was in command. Our concerns were, primarily, to accommodate **his** needs and maintain **his** comfort.

But now, on April 23, 1993, concerned about his health, I paid him a visit at the vet’s office. He was lying on a blanket on the concrete floor of a large pen at the rear of the building. It was the first time he ever saw me coming that he not only didn’t get up, but he couldn’t even make his tail wag!

The best he could do was give me his innocent am-I-doing-something-wrong-look. It was the look he gave me our first day together, when he ate the pillow on my couch! It was the look he gave me on our last day together as I walked toward him.

I wanted to lie down on that blanket with him like we’d do at home but, with all the people wandering about, it didn’t seem quite the appropriate time or place. Privately, at home, I’d get down on the floor on my back and he’d snuggle down beside me and rest his head on my outstretched arm. He’d close his eyes and I’d talk to him.

Under these public circumstances it wouldn’t have worked, so the best I could do was kneel by his side, press against him and rub his head. He closed his eyes as I said my good-byes. “My dear, dear Damien”, I whispered, “I’m sure glad you found us!!!”

*The Story Man*



*Recently, I've been reading the Constitution of the United States. It's a fascinating document that probably should be circulated around Washington, D.C. for our leaders to read as well. Many of them seem to have forgotten the historic promise of "a more perfect Union", not a perfect "more promise Union". With all the promises of all the Congresses in recent years, we now know that by early in the next century, government revenue will only cover entitlement programs and the interest on the national debt. That's the bad news. The good news may be that it leaves no more money to pay for any more Congresses.*

**Yes, It's  
The Story Man  
But Seriously, Folks**

Since those hot summer months in Philadelphia in 1787 this nation has traveled over two hundred years down the road of time. By now our Union should be "more perfect". In fact, with so much promise in all that time we should be living in the Great State of Nirvana! But, alas, we find ourselves instead, in a State of Depression - or at least, Recession. Not to mention Confusion and Frustration.

Article I of the Constitution grants the powers of "The Legislative Branch" in a

Congress consisting of a Senate and House of Representatives. Only Congress has the power to make laws. All bills raising revenue originate in the House of Representatives (Section 7). Furthermore, the Congress has the power “to lay and collect taxes....to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States” (Section B).

Unfortunately, too many of our revenue raising, program promising Congresses, and the welfare agencies they support, take pleasure in having the financial wherewithal to make increasing numbers of people dependent on them. It’s a classic vicious cycle of co-enablers. Each empowering the other to do what, otherwise, they would be incapable of doing. So, the more we come to depend on government, the more the government will have to spend to maintain that dependence. Taxes fund this whole process and tax laws already have us working almost half of each year to support Uncle Sam who is fast becoming Father Sam to many Americans.

Remember the important Sections, 7 & 8, Article I, about Congress “laying and collecting taxes”? As they “lay” and “collect”, in an effort to redistribute the wealth, let them also encourage voluntary redistribution through charitable **giving**. In other words, encourage **tax avoision** as in avoid. That’s **evasion**, as in evade, without the negative connotation. Tax evasion gets you in trouble. Tax avoision gets you deductions.

Americans have always had a basic sense of human decency to give to those less fortunate. We really don’t need massive, inefficient federal spending and “revenue sharing” for support of local social programs. All that amounts to is taking some small portion of what’s left of our tax money, after funding the bureaucracy in Washington, and sending it back from whence it came. Talk about “trickle down” economics! What’s left is a trickle and the whole process only serves to feed a wasteful and addictive “spend and depend” mentality in Washington.

With all the government-mandated, tax-supported do-gooding programs, it is still **individual giving** that continues to be the primary source of charitable support in the United States. Voluntary **giving** in 1993 totaled 126.2 billion dollars. And that’s with your government making it less appealing and more difficult to take tax deductions for charitable contributions. If, instead, such personal philanthropic impulses were encouraged with well-written and safeguarded tax avoision laws, the revenue generated for local charities and social programs would be staggering.

Furthermore, the “charitable giving” need not be confined to money and property. Personal **time** donated to volunteerism in support of hospitals, youth centers, nursing homes, schools, scouts, etc., and etc. should also be rewarded with generous tax avoision laws. The reduced revenue to the government for their redistribution to these same

organizations would be more than offset by the tangible and intangible donations of caring Americans. For those Americans who don't care, the tax avoision laws don't apply. They pay their substantial contribution in the form of ever-higher taxes directly to Father Sam, Washington, D.C. 20500!

I have a story about an experience of last April 15, that caused me to get into this whole business of taxes and charities. I am, after all, The Story Man. This story actually begins 8 years ago when I was asked to lend my name to a local golf tournament. I was hesitant, in all honesty, because I thought putting my name on anything, except my Army underwear, was a little presumptuous. I relented and within a year that little golf tournament became the source of funding for a Charity Foundation that presumptuously carries my name.

Through the years, thanks to the hard work of many volunteers and the generosity of many golfers and sponsors, we've been able to contribute about half a million dollars to many local charities. As charitable foundations go, that's not a ton of money, but for a once-a-year local golf tournament, totally volunteer-driven, it's something of which I'm very proud.



Back on tax day, April 15 of this year, we had a meeting of the Board of Directors of our Foundation for purposes of distributing some of the proceeds of our most recent tournament. We did our duty and totaled \$47,000 worth of contributions, with some \$30,000 to be distributed later.

The next day I was talking to a well-to-do friend who informed me that his personal federal tax liability increased by \$47,000! Isn't that interesting, I thought. The same amount as our Foundation had distributed the night before. I couldn't help but conclude that our \$47,000 in local charity giving was a far more efficient use of revenue than his \$47,000 in tax money to the government. I can take you to a dozen different locations

and show you what every dime of our money is doing right now. Some part of his \$47,000 is funding, among other things, for example, frequently questionable and sometimes tasteless “art”. **Private contributions by individuals** for support of the arts totaled **\$9.3 billion dollars**. Tax avoision laws will increase those art contributions even more. Far beyond the \$178 million the government is now contributing to the National Endowment for the Arts. And it makes sense to get the government out of the arts by encouraging individuals to support whatever kind of art - museums, music, theatre - appeals to them.

The more I thought about our respective 47,000 *dollarses*, the more I became convinced that we should use the tax laws to encourage individual support of those organizations that supply vital human services and free the government of much of that responsibility. With government encouragement of individual generosity we become partners in “forming a more perfect Union”. The government then can get back to its constitutional mandate to “provide for the common defense...and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity”. Otherwise, our “posterity” may decide that the only way to salvage some part of that miracle Constitution wrought in Philadelphia in 1787, is a Second American Revolution.

That, however, would violate Section 4 under Article IV which says, “The United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union....protections against domestic violence.” Come to think of it, the government hasn’t done a very good job of that either. In fact, that same Section also “guarantees...protection against invasion”. “Invasion”, in my dictionary, is defined as “the entrance of anything troublesome or harmful”. There certainly are troublesome and harmful elements affecting our “domestic tranquility”, which the Preamble to the Constitution supposedly insures, as well as “...the common defense...to establish justice...promote the general welfare and secure the blessing of liberty”.

All generations of Americans owe an enormous debt of servitude, not gratitude, for which we’ll owe them an apology and offer them the excuse, “I couldn’t do anything about it”.

Well, Article I, Sections 2 and 3, and amendments 15, 19, 24 and 26, tell us we have a right to vote “every second year”. Guess what? This is that second year. Maybe we can do something for “ourselves and our posterity” by getting off our posteriors on election day, November 8.

See you at the polls!

*The Story Man*



*It was exactly what they wanted for a 50th wedding anniversary. A small, private dining room, in a favorite restaurant, a few miles from their home. Their three children, with spouses, were the only guests. Chris, honored Husband and Father, was slow to decide what he might order. Looking at the menu, Ruth, honored Wife and Mother, said, "Why don't you try the fried chicken?" "I don't care for fried chicken", replied Chris. Ruth, never at a loss for words, was at a loss for words. "Do you mean to tell me....you're telling me....for 50 years I've been fixing you fried chicken and.....why didn't you tell me you don't like fried chicken?" Chris continued studying his menu. Then, quietly, he said, "I didn't want to cause a fuss." My hunch is, that as a bride 50 years ago, she fried up some chicken. As a new groom, he probably complimented her on it.*

*And so, a tradition began. And it was not in his nature to be a fuss-causer. What was in the nature of Chris Barkley was civility, propriety, integrity and loyalty.*

### **The Story Man Remembers His Dad**

The Barkley marriage lasted another 13 years, in sickness and in health, until death did they part. For 34 of those years, geography dictated that my visits be sporadic



and, usually, brief. There were occasional phone calls, but mostly we communicated by letter. My Mom liked to write, and they expected a response every week. I was pretty good about living up to that expectation. My Dad liked “tinkering” and math. I inherited only the “tinkering gene”. It’s good that I wasn’t expected, in my weekly communications, to do so with numbers, values and vectors. He and I did a lot of my homework together, frustrating each other over my inability to determine X by knowing Y, squared. My Dad liked to garden. I didn’t! when it interfered with my social pursuits. He won! We spent a lot of time together hoeing, planting, picking and digging. In fact, some of our closest times together were spent digging. Not your introductory, garden-variety digging. These “digs” were 6 feet down, a mile south of town. You see, he was hired to be in charge, as caretaker, of the local cemetery. I was in high school and he had just retired from 30 years in the post office.

The circumstances of that government employment were dictated, chronologically, by *his* Dad’s early death, and an impoverished youth; a mother, younger brother and sister to support; a Great Depression and a World War (or II); his own three kids; and, as the years rolled by, the retirement-light beckoning at the end of a long and unfulfilling civil service tunnel.

Being removed by extended distances from his grown children was a price he was willing to pay for the satisfaction he got from seeing his kids enjoy careers of their choosing. The choices spread us out, but it gave him and our Mom a reason to travel to places they otherwise would not.

Had he had a choice, it would have been to own his own farm. As close as he got was managing those several acres of manicured grounds a mile south of town. At last, he could work his own hours, enjoy the outdoors and be confident, well into his seventies, that he had the best looking cemetery in the county.



ILLUSTRATION BY ANGELA BARKLEY

## WHY

“Why do you love your Daddy, so?” I asked a little Boy;  
“Because he brought this home to me,” He said and hugged a toy.

“Why do you love your Daddy now, You’re twelve?” I asked the lad;  
“Because we go on hikes and things, And he’s my pal, my Dad.”  
“Why do you love your Dad grown old, And his years of service done?”  
Then the Boy, grown up, responded “Because I am his Son!”

*Ruth Barkley*

On June 15, 1990, I sent my Dad a Father’s Day card with a short, hand-written note: “I’m coming to visit you the end of the month.” The card was addressed to Colonial Manor, where he had been in residence since my Mother’s death a year and a half earlier. It was, in fact, the day of her funeral that we “kids” sat with Dad in the living room of their little apartment to discuss his future. That apartment, by the way, had been home for the 10 years since they’d sold their house, which had been home for 55 years.

Had the time come to move again? He listened to our thoughts and expressed his own. We all knew that the options were few. The logical and necessary move had to be the nursing home, where lifelong friends and proper care awaited him. They had let us know, years ago, that they did not want to live with any of us in their old age.

“Mom and I agreed that whichever one of us was left, we’d do whatever you kids decided, short of living in your homes.” They’d been there and done that. “As you know, we had Mom’s folks with us for many years, and it was very difficult.”

The room was quiet. Dad spoke. “I’d sure rather stay here, but if you think ‘the home’ is better, then I....” There was a long pause. Then, looking up to the heavens, he said, “You sure raised three awfully good kids!”

That did it. I swallowed to stifle my sob, while my Brother coughed and my Sister gasped to stifle their’s. We all excused ourselves and made a mad dash for the cool October night air. He didn’t want to cause a fuss. Two weeks later, the move was made.

I flew back for visits on special occasions, like his 95th birthday, which reminded me of my visit 3 years earlier. It was during that stay, Dad was 92, that my Mother asked me if I would “please try to convince him that he should not drive their ‘75

Chevy....ever again! He's dangerous on these icy streets and he has no business getting behind the wheel!"

We had always been a one-car family, although he did have access to the cemetery pick-up truck for the many years he groomed the grounds that contained the remains of all that was mortal of his fellow townfolk. To my knowledge, he had bought only one new car in his life. An early 60's Ford. The others were used, and generally in need of his "tinkering".

For 65 years, or more, he'd had a car of one type or another to take us on Sunday drives, **him** to work, and **them** on many motoring trips, frequently, later in life, to visit **us**.

I didn't expect, ever, to tell any man that the time had come to give up his car. Let alone my own Father. As a little boy, wondering if I'd ever be old enough to drive, I remember marveling as my Dad coordinated his feet and hands to start, steer and stop; while clutching and engaging the gears that were shifted by the lever that protruded from the floor of his '36 Dodge. He delighted in letting me sit close enough to him that I could put my left foot on the accelerator to "feed it the gas". I remember watching the muscles in his hands flex on the old wooden steering wheel.

After some brief conversation about his future driving prospects, I agreed with him that, "yes", he was "still quite capable of operating an automobile"; and he acknowledged that, I too, was right, that it was "probably too expensive, considering its minimal use, to keep the car licensed and insured." He said, "I might think about getting another one when my darn broken hip mends." That fracture, itself, was caused by a slip on the ice, a few months earlier, when he was trying to "tinker" with the dead battery on this very car.

Without giving him a chance to second-think the matter, I immediately called the Chevy dealer, an old high school friend, to come and get Dad's car. He understood. A purchase price could be worked out later. The Chevy was visible from the kitchen window. That's where Dad chose to watch. And not cause a fuss. At 92, **He** knew that the Demon: Time, wins the battle.

**I**, however, know that his Civility, Propriety, Integrity and Loyalty, won the War!

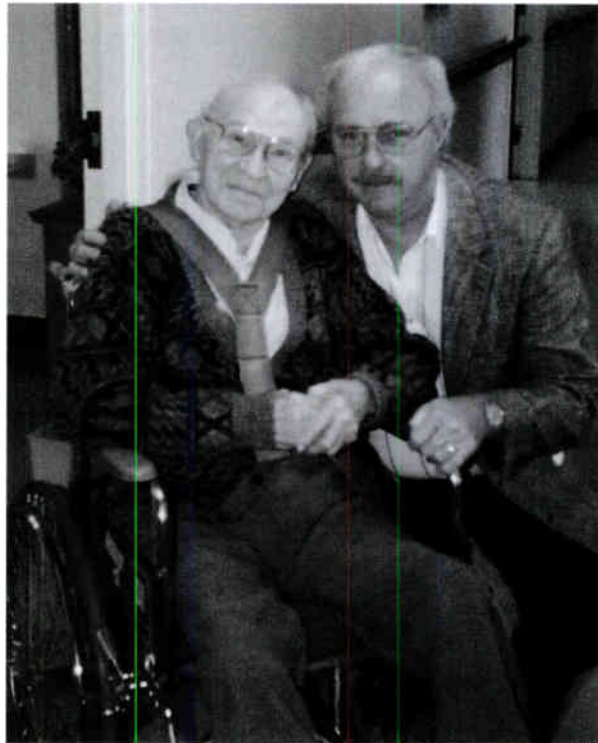
I stood behind and watched him as he steadied himself on his walker, stooped-shoulders draped with Mom's homemade shawl. There was a light snow falling that cold winter morning. He peered through the frost-covered window as they hooked his car to the tow truck and yanked it from its place outside their kitchen door. When it

was gone, up the street and around the corner, he turned away. We looked at each other, man to man. No, car driver to car driver. It was a long silence. His hands were flexing on the aluminum of his only remaining means of independent mobility. His walker. I broke the silence. "Dad? You okay?" "I'm tired", he said. "I think I need a nap." "Can I help you?", I asked. He rejected that offer. "No thanks, I can manage." That's what he said, but I bet he was thinking..." I don't need any more help from you today. Thank you, very much!"

My Mother's eyes were filled with relief. She mouthed a "thank you." My eyes were filled with tears! I turned and walked outdoors, coatless, to where the car had sat, on a very cold January morning in Odebolt, Iowa.

Now, 3 years later, as promised in my Father's Day card, I am airplane bound for Omaha. That's where my Sister lives, so we'll have a short "hello" as I rent a car to make the 100 mile drive to see my Dad. My plane is somewhere west of the Rockies, heading toward Nebraska, as I recall my Mother's poem . . .

"Why do you love your Dad grown old?" and the bottom line that says it all.... "Because I am his Son!"



With that recollection, I'm inspired to start a few lines of verse myself. Here's a part of what I wrote:

"Like most every Dad, you don't seek fame so the history books won't mention your name.

You've given more than you've taken in your 95 years, You've given love and devotion and laughter and cheers." I checked my watch. We were about 3 hours into this 4 hour flight. Now, where was I? Oh, yes.... ".....love and devotion and laughter and cheers."

I resume my writing...

“The very emotions I feel as I say this good-bye. Your life may have ended, but your memory won’t die.” Your life may have ended? Suddenly, past tense? Where did that come from?

So, I finish my rhyme, rest a bit, and then it’s time to “put my seatback up and return my writing tray table to its up and locked position.”

As I walked off the plane into the Omaha terminal I saw my sister, as usual, waiting to greet me. I felt the midwestern humidity. As I reached out to take her hand, I wasn’t very original with, “It ain’t the heat, it’s the humi...” She interrupted. “Rog”, she squeezed my hand. “The nursing home called. I’m sorry. Dad couldn’t wait for you.” “He DIED? Dad Died? When?” “Just an hour ago.” An hour ago? That’s exactly, to the moment, when I slipped into the past tense in my little tribute. It was also when I finished it, with:

“What more can I say than I love you, Dear Dad,  
You were the best Father three kids ever had!”

*The Story Man*



*Like everyone whose participation in American politics coincides with the political years of Richard Nixon, I've tried to define in my mind that man who now is buried in Yorba Linda. Finally, I did so in a letter to a friend.*

*But first, true to the spirit of the Story Man, permit me to digress.*

*I should point out that while Nixon's letters are categorized, alphabetized and housed in his own library, and at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., mine are housed in no particular order in a bunch of boxes all over the place.*

*I was taught, while growing up in modest circumstances, to save things that might have value or be needed later. Things like my original and official 1944 Lone Ranger Pedometer. It's in like-new condition, so I must not have hooked it too many times to the belt on my hand-me-down pants. Somehow, so attached, it would record how many miles I walked.*

*From about the same era, I have a homemade somersaulting clown suspended on strings between two sticks. Then there's my first baseball glove, first Bible and first letter from a friend.*



*It is that letter that prompts me to appreciate the advantages of growing up in a letter-writing family.*

*Advantage #1 - Letters cost less than phone calls.*

*Advantage #2 - Letter writing requires discipline and organization.*

*Advantage #3 - Letters, if saved, provide a valuable chronicle of life.*

**And so  
This time  
The Story Man  
Searches His Things For  
The Write Stuff**

I'll always remember the first really personal letter that I ever received. The writer was a friend, a year older and very popular, who had moved to Arizona. My reaction, upon receiving a two-page letter from him was one of amazement and pride. I was amazed that he considered me worthy, and proud to receive such a sincere and thoughtful letter. That's a gesture I treasure to this day.

The contents of the letter were very personal as he shared his feelings about his new surroundings and experiences. As I finished my first reading of that missive I knew that putting thoughts to paper and sharing them with friends would be a challenging and fulfilling avocation.

An early letter-writing endeavor to my parents contained a paragraph about my job as an early morning and late night pageboy at WCCO. That was a big CBS radio station in Minneapolis:

*"Confidentially, this station wastes more money than our family has ever known. They don't hesitate to spend \$1,000 on a Christmas party."*

The year was 1954. Between my split shifts I was a daytime radio announcing student at the American Institute of the Air. From school to job and back and forth required a couple of hours a day riding city buses. Finding time to eat was difficult, but I wanted to reassure my Mom and Dad that I was getting sufficient nutrition:

*"I am eating plenty now. I usually plan on spending a dollar and a half a day on meals. That's 50 cents for breakfast and 1 dollar for supper. I know that's a lot of money to spend everyday, but I think it's worth it."*

I had a room in a house a block from my school. The rent was seven dollars a

week, but an occasional bonus couldn't hurt:

*"Yesterday I gave Mrs. R. a check for \$16. That is for the next two weeks. I won't do that every time, but once in a while ought to keep her in a good enough frame of mind to do my washing."*

After moving on to my first job as an actual professional radio announcer in Mankato, Minnesota, I wrote:

*"You asked about my new acquaintance in your last letter. Well, she goes to Mankato State and aspires to be a second grade teacher. She's a sophomore. I've eaten supper at her parent's house twice. Her name is Nila, and do I ever have her fooled. She thinks I'm ambitious."*

Nila and I had been married a year and a half when we arrived in Utah where I was to become a rock and roll disc jockey,



"Jolly Roger, the Platter Pirate". My letter home said:

*"Salt Lake City is very, very nice. It's completely surrounded by mountains and somewhere a great salt lake...that's a ways out of town so we haven't seen that yet."*

Then, two years later, this letter:

*"Arrived at the Fort Ord receiving station at 1:50 p.m. and immediately started processing, signed papers, got haircuts, mopped floors and marched."*

As we moved from place to place there were always letters to and from the folks

back home. Weekly writings from Dallas and Denver and, finally, Los Angeles:

*"I was waiting for the light to change at the corner of Hollywood and Vine when I was overwhelmed by the memories of all the good fortune that conspired to bring me to that fabled corner."*

There was a period of time when I was out of work and writing letters was very therapeutic:

*"Picture, if you will, an elaborate business telephone system with rows of lights on it that are for incoming and outgoing calls. Each light is flashing, which means each line is on hold. That's where I'm at after 7 months of unemployment. A lot is pending, but for the moment, my life is on hold."*



After that dreadful year-and-a-half I was again a broadcaster as at least half of the *Ken and Barkley Company* on KABC TalkRadio. I got a lot of mail prompted by the content of our broadcasts. If someone took the time to write me, I would generally try to write back. It would depend, sometimes, on how concerned and how much thought went into their effort. This response was to a very concerned listener:

*"I'm truly sorry that you 'cannot stand me!' That you find my program 'ridiculous' and that you 'have to listen' to my 'constant jabber' which you 'hate'! Thank you for writing. Your friend, Roger."*

All of the letters I've written throughout the years have not been saved. In fact, most deserved the discarding they got after one quick perusal. Writing them however, has been a good creative exercise that demands some mental discipline.

Occasionally, some excerpt of what is written for personal and private consumption becomes a statement worthy, in my opinion, of public dissemination. Such is the case in my response to a letter from a listener who disagreed with a caller to our radio program. That young gentleman (?) caller, on the very day of Richard Nixon's funeral said, with an obvious consuming hostility, "I'm glad Richard Nixon is dead!"

To the writer of the letter who said she was “taken aback” by such a remark, I wrote:

*“I felt sorry for that poor soul who called to say he was glad about Nixon. Maybe, if he should live so long, he’ll realize that each generation ages and mellows because hatred and anger is self-defeating. I guess I’ve reached the age of understanding how very human Richard Nixon was. Grand opportunities and intentions unrealized. Too Loyal to friends; too Treacherous to enemies. Noble, yet Ordinary; Faithful to family, but Flawed to a fare-thee-well. And, ultimately - Indomitable! Future dictionaries should put Richard Nixon’s picture next to the definition of the word - “everyperson”!*

And now, to you, I write:

*Dear Reader,*

*Thank you for spending time with me. Remember, diatribes-to-love-lines, thank you-notes-to-hate mail, letters are still my favorite way to communicate, one on one, and a bargain at 29 cents! So don’t just sit there! Send a letter. It’s a gesture that’s a treasure! And it’s a bargain.*

*Your friend, The Story Man*



*Did you ever have to get from Odebolt, Iowa to Kalispell, Montana on a Sunday? Sure, most of us have. It's really no more difficult than getting from Burbank, California to Omaha, Nebraska, on a Friday. And that's how I spent...*

**My Summer Vacation**  
by  
**The Story Man**

I remember the good ol' days when I could fly to Omaha several times a day - nonstop - in three hours! I guess the airlines couldn't stand the simplicity of that arrangement so they decided to give the plane-taking public a challenge. Divert the passengers and make them get out of one airplane and into another in Salt Lake City or Denver or Dallas or Chicago or Minneapolis or probably, Munich, for that matter, on the way to Omaha.

Because it now takes twice as long to get there at a reasonable hour in the afternoon, it's necessary to leave from Burbank at an unreasonable hour in the morning. For this trip, Mrs. Story Man and I opted to change planes in Salt Lake City. As important as "connections" are in one's business and social life, they are even more important when it's plane-changing time at one of these "hub" airports.

I knew, for example, that we'd de-plane miles from where we'd re-plane, so as to compound the confusion with a confounding confluence of cavernous concourses up and down which we must go, I figured we'd be lucky to arrive on the "A" Concourse and depart from the "C". I was half right. We arrived on the "A" but departed from the "D" Concourse. Getting from "A" to "D" could have been a commuter flight of its own.

Hey, but look, it was worth it! We were on our way to my high school class reunion.

After a few hours' visit, some nourishment and a night's lodging at my Sister's house in Omaha, it was off in my Hertz to Odebolt, for a Saturday night party with the class of '54.

The reunion would be less joyful with the loss of two of our classmates. All 36 of us had survived until a year earlier, when our Valedictorian lost her battle with cancer. Then, just a month ago, our Quarterback was broadsided at a country road intersection a mile north of town. As seniors, he and I were especially close because the Odebolt Trojans played out of the T-formation, I was the center. It was my behind from under which Keith would "take the snap" - as we football aficionados are wont to say.

With the absence of these two from our group and the awareness of the ever-faster-passing years, I remembered another of my Mother's insightful pieces of poetic prose.

### THE PRESENT

*"All you have is now, the present moment.  
The past is gone and cannot be recalled.  
The future not yet come.  
God gives to us no power  
To reach back into the past.  
Except along the path of memory.  
Nor can you find it possible  
To explore the future, save in dreams.  
So live the present moment to the fullest.  
For that is all you have."*

*Ruth Barkley*

Not only were most of the remaining 34 classmates and their spouses in atten-



dance, but so too were three of our teachers and the man who was superintendent for 25 years. It was interesting to observe that we boys, 40 years later, are balding and gray, while the girls are blond and brunette.

As the story in the weekly *Odebolt Chronicle* would report it, “a good time was had by all”. Such a good time that at the end of the evening, plans were made for another reunion in 1999.

A short night at the DeLux Motel and it's off to Omaha to catch the early Sunday flight back to Salt Lake City and the connecting flight to Kalispell. This time we arrive at Concourse “D” and depart from “A”. I don't know. Maybe you can explain it.

The reason for this leg of our trip is that I'm to be the guest speaker Monday night, at the Montana Broadcasters Association Convention at the Grouse Mountain Lodge in lovely Whitefish, MT.

The day before this entire adventure began, I compiled a few notes that I thought would be applicable for the group I was to address. I've never really written a speech, but from my notes, exclusively for the readers of the *Flintridge Shopper*, I'm going to actually reconstruct some of what I said so that you can play like you were there too.

After all of the convention formalities and an extended dinner, I was finally introduced as “a long-time, award-winning Los Angeles radio personality and restaurateur.

The conventioners were tired after a day of golf and middle-fork-of-the-Flat-head River-white-water-rafting, which is what we did too, so I had some concern about their attention span when it was finally my turn to speak.

“Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen”, I said. “I thought I was coming here to be your speaker. I noticed on the program it says ‘Entertainment by Roger Barkley’. Entertainment is more than simply making a speech. Because of the lateness of the hour I shall attempt to speak, entertain, inform, amuse and answer your questions - all at the same time. Feel free to interrupt whenever you wish.”

“Did you hear about the guy and his wife driving down the highway when all of a sudden he sees the red lights of the police car flashing in his rearview mirror? His wife is in the passenger seat. He pulls over, the cop comes to his side of the car and says, ‘I need to see your driver's license and registration’. ‘Why?’ asks the guy. ‘Because you were speeding’, replies the officer. ‘I was not’, says the driver. ‘I clocked you, Buddy. You were going 75 in a 55 mile zone.’ ‘I beg to differ with you, officer. I was going 55. I never speed.’ ‘Well, this time you were speeding’, answered the cop. The guy says,

'How can that be? I have cruise control on this car and I always set it at 55.' The officer starts to say something when the guy's wife leans across from the passenger seat and says, 'Really, officer, there's no use arguing with him when he's this drunk.'"

Well, with that, I got a big laugh. After another joke or two and a brief bit of more serious commentary, at which they did not laugh, I congratulated the audience on knowing the difference between "entertainment" and "information".

I told them about the circuitous route I had taken to get there; From Burbank to Salt Lake to Omaha, etc., and the circumstances of my class reunion. I shared with them my Mother's quote "The Present", and I saw some knowing nods among the grayer heads in the audience when I got to, "So live the present moment to the fullest, For that is all you have!"

I shared with them my wife's comment when I told her, earlier in the Spring, that my class was having a reunion this Summer. She said, "Gosh, Story Man, you've got three months to make something of yourself."

I reminded them that their convention fell on an interesting day, historically. It was the anniversary of the date of the passing of Noah Webster, inventor of alphabetical order. Who, knowing he was at death's door, whispered in the ear of Mrs. Webster, his last dying word - "zymurgy". Sadly, some in my audience had to be "informed" that that was a joke.

"The first real speech I ever made," I told them, "was as a high school student. That speech," I continued, "opened with a quote from Horace Greeley. 'Fame is an accident. Popularity a vapor. Riches take wing. The crowd that cheers today, curses tomorrow. One thing only endures. Character!'"

With that quote I'm into the important stuff, having to do with the lack of responsibility, restraint, decency and, yes, character evident on radio and television today. I wanted to make sure they understood that it is not just the people on the air who are guilty; it's the people that hire the people who create what goes on the air who are the most responsible.



“If there’s an audience for garbage there are broadcasters ready to stand in the slop. Remember,” I said quoting from the Motion Picture Code of the ‘30’s, “‘A man may be judged by his standard of entertainment as easily as by the standard of his work.’ Yes, we have the right and freedom to say what we want, but as a Father once advised, ‘We should not be so concerned with our rights that we forget our manners.’”

I explained that I have personally experienced the eternal truth of Horace Greeley’s words. I had enjoyed a modicum of accidental fame on radio and television; I had seen my popularity vaporize as an unemployed disc jockey unable to get work which is what got me started in the restaurant business - where “riches can take wing”. I had appeared before enough large audiences to have heard the crowd’s cheers; and, I had said enough stupid things on the radio to have known their curses; too often I come up short in the “character” department, but I try to be ever mindful of John Wooden’s philosophy as expressed to his UCLA basketball players:

“There’s a difference between reputation and character. Reputation is what people think we are. Character is what we really are.” To which I added, “Reputation is for time; Character is for eternity!”

I concluded my speech that night in Whitefish, Montana, with a few additional expressions of my own philosophy. I said, “Remember, when fate knocks you flat on your back, she leaves you looking up. Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow. Any man who isn’t ruptured yet, isn’t carrying his share of the load. Show me a man with both feet on the ground and I’ll show you a man who can’t get his pants off. A bird in the hand is worthless, especially if you want to blow your nose. Time lost is gone forever. To save Time is to lengthen Life. Time is nature’s way of keeping everything from happening at once. And finally, friends, “I said, “Life is good. And, it gives us something to do!”



At that point they laughed and applauded. That to me was a good sign that I had entertained and informed.

The next day it was back to Burbank via concourse “B” and “E” at Salt Lake International. The four day vacation (?) was over. Thank you for going along.

*The Story Man*



*The generations come and go,  
Each lives their span of years,  
Their lives are seasoned with their joys  
And with their griefs and tears.*

*Those are the lines that start the poem, "The Evolution of a Grandmother", written by Ruth Barkley, who left her children hundreds of handwritten pages containing the wisdom and wit and pain and pleasure accumulated in a lifetime of eighty-eight years.*

*Life's journey starts with infancy,  
Progresses through each stage  
of childhood, youth, maturity,  
and finally old age.*

*Her notebooks full of wonderful poetry and prose and thoughtful essays on subjects profound and silly, sentimental and wise, are an expression of universal human feelings that have provided me with many hours of thoughtful reading.*

and so on Mother's Day

**The Story Man  
Remembers His Mother**  
with her own words

In each (stage)...memory builds a bridge back to yesterday  
From which with retrospective eyes the past we can survey.

Her appreciation for her own happy childhood is evident in much of what she wrote.  
For example there is...

**TIME THE THIEF**

*My darling, savor all the joys  
Of happy childhood, while you may  
For all too soon old time the thief  
Will snatch each one of them away.*

*Ah, childhood, you are much too brief.*

**LOVE AFFAIR**

*She leads him to his favorite chair  
And sits upon his knee  
Musses his hair, arranges his tie  
While he smiles beguilingly.*

*She puts her arms about his neck  
And says, "I love you so",  
Then snuggles up real close to him  
And will not let him go.*

*It is a charming love affair  
Which often is retold  
He is her darling daddy  
And she his three year old.*

## WALKING HOME WITH PAPA

*Often I walked home with Papa  
Evenings when he'd close the store,  
And hand in hand we'd walk along  
While he listened to me pour  
My childish troubles, large to me,  
Into his sympathetic ear;  
Then he'd attempt to reassure me,  
Make my troubles disappear.*

*--he'd walk a little faster;  
I would fairly have to run,  
For to Papa home was heaven  
When he had his day's work done.*

## THE LITTLE GIRL

*Last week I visited the town  
Where I had lived in childhood years,  
And walked along its seeming strange,  
But still familiar streets.  
As I walked I saw a child,  
A somewhat chunky little girl  
Who ran and jumped and skipped and hopped  
Just ahead of me.*

*I wanted her to walk with me,  
To talk to her and hear her voice,  
To look into her childish face,  
To take her hand in mine.*

*I wanted, too, to learn her name  
But, always, she was just ahead of me,  
Beyond my call and out of reach  
I saw that little girl.  
Then suddenly, I realized  
She was the child I used to be.*



## WHO PRIZES YOUTH?

*Who prizes youth?  
Not he who carelessly holds it  
Within his grasp  
And spends it with a lavish hand;*

*But he who has exchanged it for old age  
throughout the fleeting years  
And knows it cannot be recalled*

*He prizes youth.*

## OPTIMISTIC

*Don't tell us you are growing old,  
Rather let us hear you say,  
"I'm a whole year younger now, I know,  
Then I'll be on my next birthday."*



She knew, too, that there are rewards that come with age. The reward, of course, is Motherhood. It was my sister, my brother and I who shared:

## A MOTHER'S LOVE

*We often talked together of our children,  
I, of my three, she of her one,  
Discussed the latest fads in feeding,  
Schedules, and theories of child training,  
We were in accord on every topic  
Except one. She could never be convinced  
That it was possible for me to love each child  
With the same love that could be given one.  
She did not realize that a Mother's love  
Is not divided to make it go around,  
But rather, that her love is multiplied  
With the birth of each new child.*

When I saw my Mother for the last time in October, 1988, I took a nostalgic drive through the Iowa countryside and visited many sights that reminded me of my own youth. As the miles rolled by, so did familiar neighborhoods of homes and farms that prompted a flood of private recollections. The familiar faces though, we're gone. Many of those places were now in the hands of the generation that succeeds my own. That's when my Mother's words came to me:

*The Generations Come and Go, Each Lives Their Span of Years*

The implications of that eternal truth did not escape me.

Suddenly, I was struck by the fact that all around me the fertile fields had completed their season. The harvest was at hand and, with the bounty of the land removed, the fields appeared to be....dead. Depressing!

But wait! From that very harvest will come the seed that, in the spring, starts the cycle once more. The land will give life again. No one doubts that time and the elements will conspire to renew the miracle of life that will be evident in the green and golden fields of all the summers to come.

Ruth Barkley realized it, accepted it and lived a life of Love and

## TRUST

*He puts his hand in mine  
And feels secure against the world,  
Walks bravely past those things  
Which terrify a little child  
Because he knows that he  
Is safe with me. So I, when fear  
Would grip my heart, reach up  
To find the hand of God,  
And with my hand in His, I too,  
May then walk trusting, unafraid.*

*The Story Man*



*If you've been following the adventures of The Story Man in recent issues of this publication you may have noticed that it was moved to the back page in the February issue. When the charming, lovely and thoughtful Publisher of The Flintridge Shopper made that move she alerted me ahead of time because of the concern she had that I might consider it to be a demotion.*

*"Au contraire, Frau Ito", said I, impressing her, I'm sure, with my multi-linguality. "That's espacio primero to me! As a matter of fact, one of my favorite columnists is George Will and his bi-weekly writings have appeared on the back page of Newsweek Magazine for years. Infierno, if it's good enough for him, it's certainly gut enough for me."*

*It is interesting, now that I'm a prime-space back-page writer like Mr. Will, how I have this overwhelming need to express myself on political and societal issues, just as he does.*

**That's why today's Story Man is entitled  
"The Country Is Going To 'L'!"**

As in Lee, Lens, Last, License, Leniency, Lawyers and Lawmakers. I'll start

with the last “**L**” first. **Lawmakers** get there by winning elections. They promise to fight crime, protect our borders, strengthen the family, cut spending, clean up our environment, and whatever else it takes to get in office. While they “serve”, crime increases, our borders are breached, families crumble, spending spirals, and our environment deteriorates. First thing you know, it is time to get re-elected by promising again to fight...protect...strengthen...cut...clean...and etc. The lawmakers’ solution seems to be: create bigger bureaucracies - that’ll solve the problems.

A bureaucracy, in Washington or Sacramento or downtown anywhere, is a big business. Like any other successful business the first priority must be survival. The mark of good business management is not only survival, but growth. The career bureaucrats, and that is their profession, who manage government bureaucracies, want to survive too. And, they want *their* “business” to grow.

The **lawmakers** aren’t satisfied just funding the old bureaucracies that have muddled the matters they were meant to mend, but they seek new areas for bureaucratic minds. Now they think medical matters need muddling too!

Since most **lawmakers** are **lawyers** why not have thirteen thousand-word laws about cabbage farming? The bureaucracy grows with cabbage-law writers, interpreters and enforcers. The only problem the lawmaking-lawyers have solved is that of massive unemployment in their own profession.

Then there’s the **Leniency** that has given **License** to crass behavior that passes for entertainment, and greed that feeds the need for immoderate and selfish human pursuits.

More than twenty years ago Marlon Brando lent his considerable movie star stature to “**Last** Tango in Paris”. This picture pushed to the limits the bounds of what was acceptable material for big name stars to perform on the big screen in neighborhood theatres. It was I who said at the time, “Marlon Brando’s presence in such an explicit movie is going to give **license** to Hollywood for the portrayal of graphic sex and violence on a scale we can’t imagine.” You’ll have to take my word that I said that. I was alone at the time.

Maybe profanity, violence and sex make for better movies, but as the old Motion Picture Production Code itself said, “a man may be judged by his standard of entertainment as easily as by the standard of his work”. Too often we find ourselves being “entertained” by the re-creation of the vulgarity and cruelty of real life. What you see as an afternoon movie-goer you can see at night as a TV news-watcher.

The **L**ens of the camera focuses on the angry, the sensational, the bizarre, the crude and cruel among us who cheat, lie, steal, rape and kill. The **l**ens' view of Los Angeles, post-fire, post-earthquake, was that our entire city burned or collapsed. It really didn't. My view of humanity after a television newscast is that all of society has collapsed. It really hasn't...yet! But...?

If you listen to our language and watch our behavior you can't help but conclude that our **l**eniency is leading to a lack of respectfulness, politeness, and pride in self, in family, in neighborhood and country. Almost exactly between the "f" and "g" words - forbiddance and self-indulgence - is the "m" word - Moderation. Live each moment, for each moment is all we have. Living it in moderation, will help assure that there will be future moments to be lived hopefully with civility toward others.

And then there's the final "**L**", which may have set in motion a national cynicism, maybe even fatalism, that has cost us our positive attitude about the basic goodness and decency of America. Our world changed one day. Talk about youthful innocence being lost! That day we lost our adult innocence as well. We suddenly were in a league with your average Banana Republic. Our smugness about a superior society was shattered with a shot, fired by a gun, held in the hands of **L**ee Harvey Oswald.

As President, Dwight Eisenhower, said, "a well-informed public is the heart, mind and lifeblood of a democratic society". Today, we are well-informed, but we are also falling short of any standards of excellence. We're close to being too late to revive the heart, stimulate the mind and once again get the lifeblood coursing through the veins of the body, America.

I can be optimistic about the future - on the conditions that we, each one, resolve to contribute some time, energy and resources to the betterment of humankind, not only to benefit the present, but for the sake of the next generation. It's a time-tithing ten percent to needs beyond our own.

I have a renewed interest in the next generation, and beyond. You see, my wife just became a grandmother. (For me he's the younger brother I never had). With a tiny new member in our family, I'm probably particularly sensitive to the kind of world we leave for him and all the other little guys and girls who are born to our children.

It is their generations that inherit our **l**aws, live with the consequences of our **l**eniency, will know us by the **l**enses that have recorded our time and may be the **l**ast generations with a chance to salvage the American Dream of opportunity and success based on personal responsibility and a commitment to civility. That's worth repeating, if I do say so myself. Personal Responsibility and Commitment to Civility!



And furthermore, in conclusion, let me say that when I'm elected President, I promise to fight crime, protect our borders, strengthen the family, cut spending and just generally clean up...! Thank you and, please God, Bless America!

*The Story Man*



*Do you know what it is to become so comfortable in your surroundings that you cease to appreciate your accumulated treasures? Once in awhile something will nudge its way into our consciousness that, in turn, heightens our awareness for a brief moment. That nudge for me is the realization that 1995 is just around the corner...*

and so  
**The Story Man**  
**takes year-end inventory of the clutter that surrounds him**

This, I suppose, could be subtitled, “a stop to smell the roses” - and recollect - which, by any other name, would resonate as sweetly in that part of the mind that is memory.

Across the room and behind where I sit at this typing machine is an antique Atwater Kent radio. That was payment many years ago for a narration I did of “The Life and Music of Glen Miller”.

Hanging on the wall above it is a framed copy of a song Al Lohman and I wrote in 1968. Stan Worth, wonderful and gifted friend and musician, put our lyrics to music and it became our theme song -

“There’s a New Day”

There’s a new day, starting again tomorrow,  
It’s a rich day, waiting for you to borrow  
things like children's laughter  
moments after  
they’ve seen a clown -  
Simple pleasures can be treasures, just look around,  
Every new day’s really a chance for changing  
So take your life and give it a rearranging  
There’s no ceiling for your feelings, aim for the sky  
'Cause there’s a new day, starting again tomorrow.



We purposely wrote “aim for the sky” in hopes that some airline would buy our song for use as a commercial. No airline did...or has...yet! In the same frame with that sheet music is a check for \$3.74 which is the only royalty payment my song earned me from the American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers.

Down the hallway are all kinds of framed pictures, each marking an occasion that was significantly important to be displayed in my nearly private lower floor sanctum. Every picture and document has a story to go with it, like, for example, my U.S. Patent certificate no. 288,502 for the Push 'n Shave shaving brush. The story behind it is that nobody wanted to buy one, patented or not. I still think it’s a great invention. Just ahead of its time, probably.

Then there are the books. They’re on the floor, on the table, and on the bookshelves to my immediate left. Among them is the *Bible*, revised standard version, that my Mom and Dad gave me. I was 16 at the time. It looks to have been well-used, but I’m afraid its deteriorating imitation-leather cover has suffered more from time and the elements than from usage. Inside there’s a little inscription in my Mom’s handwriting: “Proverbs 1:8”. Let’s see now, there’s Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy - and eventually, Proverbs 1:8.

“Hear, my Son, your Father’s instruction, and reject not your Mother’s teaching;”

Thank you, Mom. You and Dad instructed and taught well. Now I have to wonder, would I dare note a similar reference to my kids?

On the same shelf as the Bible is *America and Americans* published by Viking Press in 1966. Its author, John Steinbeck, writes:

“...this essay...is inspired by curiosity, impatience, some anger and a passionate love of America and Americans.”

There follows 204 pages of “opinionated pictures”, beautiful and interesting: and a text about us that is perhaps controversial, certainly fascinating and, finally, I find it reassuring.

Mr. Steinbeck’s “afterword”, on page 205, concludes, “...Something happened in America to create the Americans (who) now face the danger; success, the anesthetic of satisfaction. We have failed sometimes, taken wrong paths, paused for renewal, filled our bellies and licked our wounds; but we have never slipped back - never.”

Then, there’s a gift copy of Milton Berle’s *Private Joke File*. Okay, Uncle Miltie, let’s take a look. “It’s always better to call the plumber. A flush is better than a full house.”

In perfect juxtaposition, next to Berle’s book, is *The Lessons of History* by Will and Ariel Durant. How many of us, for joining the Book of the Month Club, received free, the Durant’s *History of Civilization*? I still have my dozen volumes and over 11,000 pages, all of which were summed up, thank goodness, by the authors in 1968, in 102 pages, published by Simon and Schuster:

“History”, they concluded, “...becomes...a spacious country of the mind, wherein a thousand Saints, Statesmen, Inventors, Scientists, Poets, Artists, Musicians, Lovers and Philosophers still live and speak, teach and carve and sing... Let it be our pride that we put meaning into our lives.”

New to my shelves is *Living To Beat Hell*. In its pages I renewed my admiration for the late Dr. Kenneth A. Carlson. Richard, his son, published a collection of some of Dr. Carlson’s sermons delivered originally from the pulpit of the First Methodist Church of Glendale. Think about this:

“Perhaps it is not so strange that a man should live forever...as that he should live at all.”

Also, recently, I’ve been able to spend some time with my friend, Bruce Herschensohn, in the pages of his new book, *Lost Trumpets*, from the Claremont Institute Press: “As citizens of this nation, we have inherited a magnificent state... Previous generations...made us the beneficiaries of gifts never before passed from one generation to the next. We need to maintain those gifts and add to them for the next generations.”

There, on the bottom shelf, sits *The American Eagle*, from Beyond Words Publishing. It complements my sizable collection of American Eagles in brass, glass, crystal, porcelain, wood, pewter, plastic and clay that add to the aforementioned “clutter” that surrounds me. Of our national bird, Ken Carey writes:

“Above convention’s ribbon-narrow roadway, the eagle plays with gravity, with light. To feel as the eagle feels! To know wind as the eagle knows wind. To breathe as the eagle breathes, to see as she sees, to glide with her, to ride with her upon the drafts, spiraling higher, ever higher.....in a weightless realm between the worlds.”

Now on the very top shelf to my left, are the five notebooks that are my “book”. “...*Maybe, someday*, is notebook number I. Number II is “...*Maybe, someday continues*”. III is “*Beyond...maybe, someday*”. The IVth is “*As if there weren’t already enough of...maybe, someday*”. At the moment I’m working on “*Moving write along with Vol. V...maybe, someday*”.

From the Preface of Vol. I:

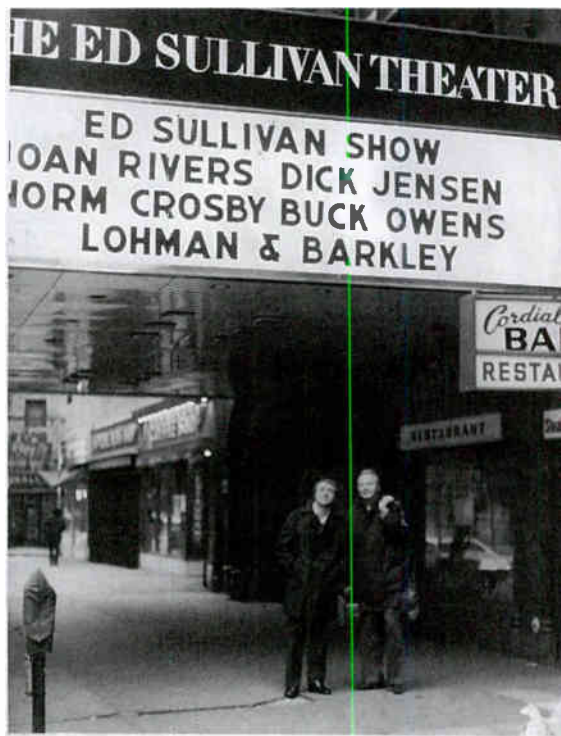
“I always wanted to write the world’s first UN-authorized AUTO-biography so I could sue myself for slander. Instead, what I’ve written and assembled here are meditations and reflections on a life and career still in progress, to be published...maybe, someday.”

Well, enough of this. I have a deadline to meet. I have to write my Story Man piece for the *Flintridge Shopper*. I’d better put these friends back on their shelves and table tops, in the clutter, so I’ll know where to find them again.

Oh, one final *Lesson of History* from Will and Ariel Durant: “If a man is fortunate he will, before he dies, gather up as much as he can of his civilized heritage and transmit it to his children. And to his final breath he will be grateful for this inexhaustible legacy, knowing that it is our nourishing mother and our lasting life.”

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and **your** friends! And, aim for the sky!

*The Story Man*



*I wasn't always **The Story Man**. For a few years in the '50's and early '60's I was **The Program Director Man** for several radio stations. In that capacity I hired a disc jockey by the name of Al Lohman to host an early morning radio show on KLAC in Hollywood. A year and a half later I left the management ranks of the radio station to join Lohman as the co-host of the Lohman and Barkley Radio Program. That two-man association also resulted in several television shows and many stage and nightclub performances.*

*The radio program provided nearly constant employment for the better part of 25 years. During that time we developed an array of mythical radio characters who took on physical characteristics and lived personal lives in our minds and in the minds of our listeners. It's been 10 years since the voices of our "radio staff" were silenced by the breakup of Lohman and Barkley, "those two boys without a care". I still get inquiries about the whereabouts of **Ted J. Baloney, W. Eva Schneider Baloney, Judge Roy Bean, Cecil Hoodspith, Maynard Farmer, Chef Leonard Leonard, Roscoe Boscoe, Nurse Delvina Lockhart and Tonto**. Not to mention **Rear Admiral Bruno I. Abernathy**, deceased; and the Dean of the University of Lohman and Barkley, **Dean, Dean Dean**. There were other lesser players in our menagerie, too. For this exercise, and in response to one request, I'm going to create a little farcical history of their lives in the intervening years. Even if you never heard of me, or us, or them; I think you'll find their stories to be compelling reading as...*



**The Story Man  
remembers  
The Lohman and Barkley  
Radio Staff  
where they've been and where they are today!**

*Remember now, this stuff is all based on the lives of people who never existed, except in our childlike minds on the radio. It's been 10 years since their nonexistence and so the years between then and now never really happened, either. This is the world of absolute fantasy and bizarre, probably schizoid, imaginings. You are now entering a zone beyond twilight.....*

In 1986 the University of Lohman and Barkley lost its federal funding and was sold for taxes after it was revealed that Dean, Dean Dean was absconding with all tuition and capital improvement money in order to finance his affair with the oft-married **Dame Edith Pines-Loudermilk-Duncan-Beast-Stranger-Muldare-Lyle-Brown-Muldare**. At that time, her then husband, **Officer Muldare**, one of Pine City's finest, arrested the Dean on trumped-up charges of overtime parking in the white zone at the airport. Interestingly, Dean, Dean Dean, doesn't own a car and Pine City doesn't have an airport. Nonetheless, the charges stuck and this once highly respected academician continues to be held in maximum security on his own recognizance. Dame Edith, by the way, is now living in Oxnard and is married to Rear Admiral Bruno I. Abernathy, deceased, who loves being near the ocean and still gets in a little golf.

Maynard Farmer, lady's man and town ne'er-do-well, fell on hard times when he was taken for all he was worth by one of a slew of accusers, who claimed to have pictures of Maynard making an improper erotic advance. In truth, he was just adjusting the suspenders on his bib overalls while visiting with **Pastor Starmer's** wife following Thursday night choir practice. Maynard, who sings the baritone part, reacted violently and slew one of the slew of accusers. His dream team of Public Defenders got him off with a slap on the wrist and a letter of reprimand. Roscoe Boscoe, by the way, continues to sing soprano in the Starmer church choir and weekly dances the offertory solo. Roscoe remains unmarried and lives in a room the size of a closet across from the Y.

The big news, of course, is Ted J. Baloney's announcement that he's put together an exploratory committee to sample support for his possible bid for the Republican Presidential Nomination. He continues to enjoy his success on the LPGA Senior Tour and coaching the national champion "Almighty Yaks" of the National Lawn Bowling Association. Coach Baloney, and his wife of many years, W. Eva Schneider Baloney, continue to commute to Los Angeles from Brawley on his fire truck. Neither he nor his wife has work in L.A., so many observers wonder why they continue the daily commute.

Ted puts his hat and hairpiece on the passenger seat of the open cab truck so Mrs. Schneider-Baloney has to stand on the back bumper of the rig holding on to an extension ladder for dear life.

“I know how important Ted’s hat and hair are to him”, says W. “Sometimes I’m dislodged from the bumper when he accelerates and I do everything I can to hang on to the extension ladder as it swings wildly behind the truck. If I lose my grip he tries to note where I land, bless his heart, so that he can pick me up on his way back to Brawley”.

Chef Leonard Leonard was recently honored by “Contributions d’Cuisine Magazine” for his fast food innovations. The “Leonard Leonard 30-Second Drive-Thru Viscus Surprise” and “Surprise Supreme with Cheese” garnered a cover story and a four page fold-out center-spread picture of the Chef and an all-you-can-eat night-on-the-town for deux at “Frenchie’s Fast and Furious”! Leonard has decided that this accolade is the capstone of his career and the time has come for him to hang up his *La Toque*. That’s the French Chef’s Hat that he got as a 12 year old when he and his dad, gangster Louis Leonard IV, attended *La Toque* night at a Padre/Expo game in Montreal. He’s often wondered how his life might have gone had it been glove, bat or athletic underwear night. It was there and then that he decided not to follow in his father’s footsteps but devote his life, instead, to preparing and eating food. That’s why it took a four page fold-out in “Contributions d’ Cuisine” to display Leonard as he posed, prone, on several sheep skin, bear skin and cowhide rugs on the floor between his refrigerator and bed in his one room apartment in Colton.



Some good news for two of the old staff. Cecil Hoodspith and the widow Bansback are married and expecting twins in January '97. Congratulations, Cecil and Verne.

Nurse Delvina Lockhart might have saved Tonto's life with some quick thinking and a mastery of CPR. As it turned out, neither was necessary. It all began when Tonto, a widower, took a touch too much tabasco in his turkey taco while dining out, with his son, Tonto Too at the hospital commissary. Nurse Lockhart heard him yelp and jumped to help with a cold glass of water and mouth to mouth resuscitation. He didn't need the latter, but Nurse Lockhart has always admired the quiet Native American Companion of The Lone Ranger always dressed in a loin cloth, weather permitting.

Her resuscitation techniques were misinterpreted by onlookers and by Tonto Too, too, who grabbed Nurse Lockhart by her blond locks. She, in turn, had a lip-lock on Tonto and, in the melee, she inadvertently sucked the very life out of Tonto. Everyone agrees it was an accident, but she is being held in Comunicado, a resort area outside Pine City. Tonto Too was being held, too, as an accessory, but was released when he explained that he was abused as a papoose.

*Well, that pretty much brings you up-to-date on many of those who inhabited the Lohman and Barkley radio world. Those two, Al and Roger, of course, went their separate, but equal, ways in May of 1986. There were a lot of good years and a lot of laughs with a lot of imaginary friends. The reality of fantasy is that it need never end, unlike this cockeyed look at a concocted stroll through the years with **The Story Man**.*

The End.

Oh, by the way, Judge Roy Bean is in Iowa writing a little love story about a stranger and a lonely farm wife. While out driving one day in his dusty pick-up truck, the stranger takes his eye off the road to take a picture of a covered bridge. He and his truck end up in one of the ditches of Madison County. Roy's book, "Those Darn Dirty Ditches of Iowa" will be on bookshelves this fall.

*Yes, I know I should have quit a paragraph ago. Good-bye.*

***The Story Man***



*Time alone will tell, but for many of us these days may be tomorrow's "good old days". However, I'm sure they'll not be known as the "gentle old days", such as were the days of my youth. Or, at least, so it seems to me. Gentle is a simple enough word meaning **caring and compassionate; considerate and kind**. I grew up in a **caring** family in a **compassionate** community. Our public behavior was **considerate** of the sensitivities of others. Even our humor, for the most part, was **kind** or, at most, gently irreverent.*

*I learned early on to respect my parent's expectations for my social, academic and extracurricular behavior, as well as my all around performance at home and on the job. Back then, Moms and Dads didn't have to concern themselves with the lyrics of popular songs, because our music was gentle, too. Sometimes the lyrics were stupid, but never offensive. Nor did they worry that their minor children might be exposed to motion pictures with "adult content". All the movies, and there were some very good ones, were not bad because of "bad" language, violence or sex. Entertainment, in those days, was escape from, not immersion in, reality.*

*Scenes of the world's news, including when the whole world was at war, were edited into short snippets and shown before the main feature in the theatres. Broadcast news was confined to 15 minutes in the evening on the radio. As we settled into the 1950's, Ike, the President who had excelled in the not-so-gentle world of war and*

*politics, nonetheless conveyed a gentleness that either reflected or, maybe even influenced the times.*

*I am frequently reminded of those gentle old days because of the harsh, aggressive, immoderate and, frequently, cruel behavior of too many of our current crop of entertainers(?) and heroes(?). The tragedy is that there are those who use their power to pollute our culture by exploiting, for personal or corporate profit, the tasteless, the ugly and the offensive. Well, it is possible to succeed otherwise; and even become historically significant, because there will forever be a more powerful force.*

**The Story Man  
and  
The Power Of Gentleness  
or  
A Tribute To Thistle-Plucking  
Flower-Planters**

Gentleness is confidence with a conscience! - my definition. Maybe that's why the America of my youth was more gentle. Win a world war and you *should* be confident - and, as a nation, we were conscious of a responsibility for two decades of post-war growth and reconstruction of devastated nations and the lives of affected individuals, foreign and domestic. Gentle acts of power, indeed.

I have come to the conclusion that we lost our gentleness on November 22, 1963. The assassination of an American President will tend to shake a civilized nation's confidence. Three years later, John Steinbeck wrote about a changed America in his fascinating 1966 history/picture book, "America and Americans".

*"They had rules, rules concerning life, limb and property.  
Rules governing deportment, manners, conduct and rules defining honesty,  
dishonor, misconduct and crime.*

*The rules were not always obeyed, but they were believed in, and breaking them  
was savagely punished."*

Today, we have more laws concerning "life, limb and property" than any other nation in the world. In fact, Charles Evans Hughes, former Supreme Court Chief Justice, said:

*"The United States is the greatest law factory the world has ever known."*



Even with all of our laws, the rules for “deportment, manners and conduct” seem to be ignored. Ignored for lack of parental example, ignored out of stupidity, and often ignored for profit. That’s called greed! Not an element of *gentleness*, a priceless and unique human trait.

Alexander Hamilton, American statesman, said:

*“The first duty of society is justice.”*

Justice, simply defined, is fairness, another quality of gentleness. He said:

*“Justice is the highest of the 7 Cardinal Virtues”.*

But what of the other 6 virtues? Using my trusty dictionary, they further define the Power of Gentleness.

*Prudence: “wisdom in reason, forethought and self-control”*

*Temperance: “moderation in action, thought and feeling”*

*Fortitude: “strength and firmness of mind”*

The list of the 7 Cardinal Virtues is completed with the 3 theological virtues:

*Faith: “belief in and loyalty to God”*

*Hope: “confidence and trust”*

*Charity: “love in its perfection”*

Put those all together and what do you have? Terminal Gentleness!?

Among some extemporaneous remarks Bobby Kennedy made on the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.:

*“What we need in the United States is love and wisdom and compassion toward one another...to dedicate ourselves ...to make gentle the life of the world.”*

But gentleness is not timidity - as Theodore Roosevelt wrote in 1899:

*“...We admire the man who never wrongs his neighbor; who is prompt to help a friend; but who has those qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life.”*

While quoting presidents, the time has come to quote the greatest of them all.



Beginning with the powerful prose of his “Thanksgiving Proclamation”:

*“It is the duty of nations as well as of men to confess their sins in humble sorrow and genuine repentance”.*

The year, 1863, and the country was in the midst of the very least of gentle times, as the President, with confidence and conscience, proclaimed:

*“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.”*

Abraham Lincoln concluded:

*“...that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people.”*

Powerful words of Presidential gentleness at the height of the Civil War.

*Gentle* is a civil word - with the strength that comes from all that defines it: *love*; and *caring, compassion, consideration and kindness, fairness, wisdom, reverence and loyalty!*

When Lincoln was asked how he hoped to be remembered, he said:

***“I WANT IT SAID OF ME BY THOSE WHO KNEW ME BEST THAT I ALWAYS PLUCKED A THISTLE AND PLANTED A FLOWER WHERE I THOUGHT A FLOWER WOULD GROW.”***

Okay, Abe. And may we, no matter the extent to which we succeed - personally, professionally, socially or politically - always remember that plucking and planting best define the Power of Gentleness!

***The Story Man***



*Ronald Reagan, we are told, beginning in the early '60's, wrote and delivered what was referred to as "The Speech". It was political in content and the philosophy expressed therein was broad enough that it worked on behalf of candidates of like political persuasion for at least a decade.*

*Actually, "The Speech" eventually made Mr. Reagan a viable candidate himself and it contributed mightily to propelling him into a couple of elected executive positions of his own.*

*Well now, I am frequently asked to make speeches, too. Many times, through the years, I've accepted the invitation to do so. I've never really assembled "A Speech", rather, I've tended to tailor my remarks to fit my mood at the moment, the audience I'm addressing, or the season of the year (or time of day) for that matter.*

*Sometimes, because of a conflict with a previous commitment, I am unable to accept a particular invitation. Once in a while I turn down the opportunity simply because I feel I have nothing to say of interest to the particular group that has invited me.*

*What I want to do here is write some remarks that you can use when I'm not*

*available. If you do it with conviction and do it often you, too, might become President of the United States.*

**It's  
"The Speech"  
by  
"The Story Man"**

**Good Evening**

*You'll change "evening", of course, to morning or afternoon, depending on the time of day you're delivering "The Speech".*

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

*You'll want to be alert and adapt this to fit the audience. For example, it might be all ladies (or all children).*

*Note: Some feminists do not like being called "Ladies" so, if you see Gloria Allred in the audience, be sure to say "persons"!*

**It's a pleasure for me to come before you tonight.**

*Or, of course, this morning, or this afternoon.*

*Note: Say "it's a pleasure" even if it isn't. You won't endear yourself if you say, "being here is a pain in the neck".*

*An additional note: Don't say, "it's a pleasure" if you're delivering "The Speech" at a funeral. Say instead, "I'm sorry for the circumstances that bring us here this evening" (or morning, or afternoon).*

**First of all, I want to thank Mrs. Ferguson for that lovely introduction.**

*You'll want to use the name "Mrs. Ferguson" only if a Mrs. Ferguson actually introduces you. If it isn't Mrs. Ferguson, I don't know what to advise you to do.*

**Congratulations to those of you who were installed as officers of this fine organization.**

*That line is applicable only if you're delivering "The Speech" at an installation dinner (or breakfast or lunch)....and then only if "The Speech" comes after the installation ceremony.*

**Fortunately, this is a speech and not a written presentation. I say that because recent polls indicate that one third of our high school graduates are illiterate and so, based on those figures, I have to assume that 1 in 3 of you would not be able to read these remarks.**

*Delete that line if you're making a high school graduation address.*

**As Robert Maynard Hutchins once said, “The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”**

*It’s good to use a quote early on and then refer back to it later in “The Speech”.*

**If we don’t do a better job of preparing the young, then we are doomed.**

*Note: I think we’re probably doomed no matter what, anyway, but don’t tell the audience. That’ll just depress them.*

**John Kennedy said, “A child miseducated is a child lost”. He also said, “It’s o.k., Marilyn, Jackie won’t be back ’til tomorrow night.”**

*It’s good every now and then to insert a little humor in “The Speech”.*

**In America we point with pride and view with alarm. Pride in the accomplishments that have made this country the envy of the world. Alarm at the current moral and ethical deterioration of our society that threatens the nobility of our country’s purpose on this planet.**

*Utter this with profundity but don’t pause too long after having said it, or your audience will realize its platitudinosity.*

*Note: You might want to use “platitudinosity” in “The Speech”, as...*



**Platitudes are a dime a dozen. Platitudinosity is frequently rewarded at election time.**

*Then name a platitudinous politician*

**Just ask \_\_\_\_\_!**

*Note: any name that comes to mind.*

**Speaking of (*insert name of aforementioned politician*), It was Jeremy Thorpe who said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his friends for his political life!”**

*Note: This will work particularly well if the politician named above is Bill Clinton, for example. In another time the name Richard Nixon would have worked.*

**Our lawmakers are, for the most part, lawyers. Lawyers love laws. Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes once proclaimed, “The United States is the greatest law factory the world has ever known.”**

*Supreme Court Justices are good people to quote. If a Justice said it, it must be true.*

**The truth of that statement is evident in the intrusion of government in every aspect of our lives with the countless laws that not only dictate behavior but personal choices.**

*Don't give them time to think about that one, either.*

**In education, for example, we were better educated and more literate when education was controlled by educators, not politicians.**

*I don't know if that's true or not, but the blame's got to go someplace, and it does make sense. So who's gonna argue it?*

**Would we have fewer laws if we had fewer lawmakers? In this day of superhighway communications, instantaneous radio and television coverage of local and international events, we probably could do without at least half of our elected representatives.**

*You're getting ready to make your point, so gesticulate as you speak. Slice your hand through the air to indicate cutting in half.*

**As lawmakers retire and die we could combine congressional districts with the intent of ending up with half a House of Representatives. Thus, half the need for offices, staffs, travel and benefits. And I'll bet things would be just as screwed up as they are today....at half the cost.**

*Wait for the laugh and then keep on talking.*

**That's how you start to really reduce the size of government. Then, hopefully, those remaining lawmakers will give up the idea of taxing at the national level for funding local needs. Just as we remember the words of Robert Maynard Hutchins.**

*This is where you make your reference back to an earlier quote.*

**...“the object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves” we must now educate ourselves to the altering reality of America in a new century!**

*Say that with such conviction, while gesticulating, that your audience thinks they’ve heard something profound. Then gather up your papers from the podium while saying...*

**Thank you very much!**

*With that, smile, shake hands with Mrs. Ferguson and humbly acknowledge your standing ovation.*

*Note: When you become President, remember*

***The Story Man***





*The Story Man column I had suggested, for this issue of the La Cañada Flintridge Magazine was called “The Story Man’s Last Writes”. I didn’t write it with intentions of not writing again, it was just an interesting mental exercise. One you might want to try yourself. What would you write if you knew that it was to be the last opportunity to express yourself? What opinions and advice would you offer and what conclusions would you draw? Well, I’m happy to announce that my last writes will have to come later. Because, instead, this time...*

**The Story Man  
is  
Write Here, Write Now**

Going to write about way back last September 16th, at the Pasadena Hilton Hotel. Ah, yes, I remember it well. That was the night that the Verdugo Hills Hospital Foundation honored me as their “Humanitarian of the Year”.

When the idea was first proposed, in the Spring of the year, over lunch at the Flintridge Inn, I was taken aback, as they say.

“Surely you can do better than me!” I exclaimed. (Thus the exclamation point)

“Don’t call me Shirley”, said Krystle Manning, Director of the Foundation Staff.

At that point our delicious food was beautifully presented and professionally served, and our discussion continued. Foundation Executive Vice President, Gary Steinhauer, taking advantage of our long acquaintanceship, made a strong personal appeal. My partner, Jim Campbell, a Foundation Board member, was also in attendance. In fact, it was he who set the wheels in motion for this lunch in the first place. (With the understanding that they pay for it.) It was Ms. Manning who finally convinced me to be still, relax and accept the honor.

Yes, they agreed, “Humanitarian of the Year” sounds terribly presumptuous.

“I would be quite content to be, simply, the “Man of the Evening”, I offered.

“What if, next year, the honoree is a woman?” Krystle questioned.

(Thus the question mark)

“Would she be a “Woman of the Evening?”

“Good point”, I conceded.

So plans began for the 1995 “Humanitarian of the Year” Award Dinner. Let’s face it, such affairs are staged for purposes of raising money by wining, dining and entertaining the generous folks who wish to support the honoring organization. The more tables sold, the more money raised. So, the hard work begins. Dinner venue, dinner menu, invitations, program participants, program content and on and on.

And this year an additional fund-raising wrinkle was added as Nila Barkley, Mrs. Story Man; Tina Marie Ito, Publisher of this magazine; Laurie Balmer, creative consultant to us all; Barbara Strawn, writer, coordinator and assistant to the honoree; and the pros at First Class Printing and Graphics of Glendale; put together a booklet with official proclamations and tributes to...er...us...well...me. It made big additional bucks for the Foundation and will be my lifelong treasure. Imagine having friends willing to pay to say wonderful and glowing things about you for 56 pages! I appreciate every quality page.

The night arrived and so did the generous attendees. Among them, our children and spouses. A few public figures who, I’m sure, didn’t need another night out. Like, for example, our Sheriff, Sherm Block, and our State Senator and some of the Newt Russell family. The Master of Ceremonies? Just L.A.’s most respected (so what’s he doing at my dinner?) TV Anchor and Commentator, Jess Marlow and wife, Phyllis. Bruce Herschensohn delayed a Vegas holiday and Steve Bridges brought along his many voices for some fun and phony phone calls from Tom Brokaw, President Clinton

and Vin Scully, among others. Plus 200 other VIF's (Very Important Friends).

Father Gregory Coiro opened the evening with a few pithy pre-invocation remarks and a lengthy plug for "the *Ken and Barkley Company* of KABC TalkRadio, L.A.'s only local talk station". Then, it was prayer time, and his gracious and kind words made me wonder who he was talking about. Me?! Oh my. Thank you!

When one is being honored at such an affair, one almost needs to emotionally remove oneself from the awareness of being the subject of the tribute. The dais, of course, is elevated so everyone in the room can see you. The many spoken accolades are well-intentioned, but nodding in agreement by the honoree would probably be inappropriate. Blushing is an embarrassment, and you can't get up and leave the room. So, the only thing to do, future Men and Women of the Night, is to sit there with a pleasant, kind of vacant, smile.

It's not difficult to play like they're saying all those nice things about someone else, because you know the real truth about yourself. For example, that very morning, there was this inconsiderate, rude and stupid motorist who pulled in front of me in the Rose Bowl parking lot. I admit to having some very bad, unhumanitarian thoughts about that jerk in his fancy car.



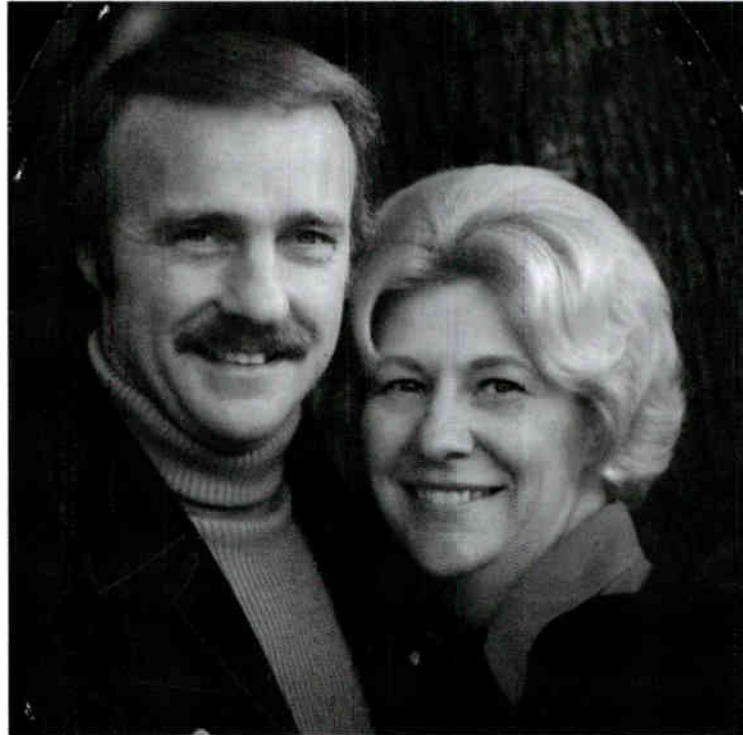
But, back to the dinner itself. Unbeknownst to me, my little hometown in Iowa had a considerable contribution to make to the evening's entertainment. Back in July, the local newspaper, *The Odebolt Chronicle*, had printed my biography and the story of my "Humanitarian" honor on the front page.

That started some boyhood chums to spread the word and plan a few surprises. Among them was a video greeting from my brother, who just happened to be in Odebolt from Chicago, wanting to know why I wasn't in town for the "big event". They cut to Mayor Bensley reading a proclamation that "Roger Barkley Day" was being celebrated in Odebolt on September 16. Classmates and townsfolk sent lovely cards and letters that'll be rereading material for years to come. For me, fond memories of a happy childhood.

Next, they showed a collection of photographs that kinda' chronicle my life with an appropriate(?) narration by Jess Marlow. This confirmed that I've had a happy adulthood, too. The evening ended with Rick Carlson doing a super singing job on "There's a New Day Starting Again Tomorrow". It's a lovely melody with lyrics that I helped write a long time ago.

Well, if we ever do publish my "Last Writes", I certainly must include my thanks to all of you for being a part of that night. **You are the Humanitarians, year after year!**

*The Story Man*



*It is said that true friendships will survive years of absence. I have some that date back to my childhood, and the bond remains. Maybe it's tougher for friendships to survive years of presence. An English writer, William Hazlett, observed: "Though familiarity may not breed contempt, it does take the edge off admiration."*

*Friends need not, necessarily, be **individual** humans. Friends can be pets or even **things** with which you are familiar and comfortable. I am sad to say I've finally made up my mind to discard a familiar **friend** that came with me to this lovely valley over 27 years ago. It was in January of 1968 that The Story Man and his Story Book Family moved to the eastern side of the dell in the La Cañada foothills. The view to the west was of the hills of Flintridge. For those who might not know, it was 8 years later that the residents of the two hillsides, and those in the lush valley between, developed a **friendship** that resulted in incorporation.*

**The Story Man  
becomes  
The History Man**

Had La Cañada and Flintridge residents not united as one; annexation, in bits and pieces, by both Pasadena and Glendale, would have been our fate. Cityhood was approved in November, 1976, by more than 3 to 1 of our residents. And it culminated 3 years' work by over 400 volunteers, united in *civic* friendship, to make La Cañada

Flintridge the 79th City in the County of Los Angeles.

It was also necessary, at the same time, for the new city to elect a governing body that consisted of five Founding Fathers. From that group the first officially elected Mayor was chosen. He replaced our unofficially elected Honorary Mayor, who just so happens to have been my friend, Mrs. Story Man. Let it be long-remembered that Her Honor performed her duties with grace. That's not a person, Grace, but "grace" as in "charm", "polish" and "suavity".

Our first "real" Mayor was George Parrish. The Council consisted of Michael Mount, Warren Hillgren, Ed Krause and Los Angeles police officer, J.D. Smith. For purposes of making a point about friendship, I single out Officer Smith who, in his 20 years of service on the LAPD, had been a street cop, a motorcycle cop, a detective cop and somehow, in the course of all that copping, he completed law school and passed the California Bar.

As an attorney, and police lieutenant, he was selected by Chief of Police, Ed Davis, to be his personal legal advisor and Liaison Officer with the courts and the state legislature. As a resident of this community, J.D. also wanted to be actively involved in the decisions affecting the early life of our city. Today, still a La Cañada Flintridgean, the Honorable J.D. Smith is a Superior Court Judge, Criminal Courts Building, downtown Los Angeles. He was the first, and probably only, active-duty police officer ever appointed to the bench. That was 13 years ago. It was during those hectic La Cañada Flintridge cityhood campaign days that His Honor and I met and developed a commiserating, consoling and counseling companionship - with some hunting and fishing on the side. In other words, a *personal* friendship, that years ago became a family friendship.

And families get into friendships that might just become business partnerships, too. One such immediately comes to mind. There's my restaurateur friend, Jim Campbell, a community spirited native of these incorporated parts, who I met 10 years ago during the planning stages for a local golf tournament. Five friendly years later, a business relationship began that begat a growing group of restaurants. Trust and respect aren't bad in a friendship, either.





I share all this so that you'll have an appreciation for the value I place on a variety of friendships; civic, personal, family, business and *otherwise*. Friendship means loyalty to that someone or *something* that will always be there for you. But, in the case of the dependable, nearly 30 year *friend* that I'm about to jettison, my loyalty must give way to the reality of a need for change. From this course I cannot be dissuaded.

There's an interesting book that chronicles the rise and fall of a friendship through an exchange of letters, from 1967 to 1974, between comic/TV star, Dan Rowan, and author, John D. MacDonald. The creative writing talents of both is evident in "A Friendship", published in 1986. It was a friendship that flourished for years, then faded as fame and fortune reared its ugly head. It's fascinating to follow the well-documented dynamics of a friendship based on respect, but where mutual admiration turned sour. These two had a command of the language that made their correspondence particularly readable. But, people change, times change and yes, *language* changes.

It's the change in language that is causing me to cleave, dissolve and disunite myself from my old friend, my —*dictionary*. Yes, my dictionary which, itself, defines "friend" as "a person attached.....by feelings of affection or personal regard". I certainly have that for the 2059 pages of "*The Random House Dictionary of the English Language - The Unabridged Edition*". Through the years it has provided me with all the words that I need to communicate daily on the radio. By the way, I share those radio hours with a partner and yet another friend, Ken Minyard.

"So," you ask, "why, Story Man, at this point in your life, after all these years, would you discard your *friend*, the dictionary?" I must admit that it is still serviceable, (that's where I got cleave, disunite and dissuade), but think about it - the world has undergone prodigious transmutation (a lot of change) in 27 years, and my benign dictionary has not transmuted with it. Sure, it can hold its own in a conversation, but there are words out there now that it has never even heard of.

I bought it in 1966 before there were such words as "fiberoptics", the "internet" and "multimedia". It does have wordage like "suavity", "prodigious", "transmutation" and "punctilious" (that one I've never been able to work into a sentence — yet). It can help me spell "liaison" and "commiserating", both of which would have been misspelled had I not looked them up. In fact, "misspelled" too, would have been, except for my trusty *Random House*.

I've kept that big book handy on a wrought iron stand behind my chair at the desk where I sit. I've knocked it over when I've carelessly circumnuted that same chair to enjoy the view to the west, across our verdant valley toward the hills of Flintridge.

“Circumnutate”, by the way, means “to move around in an irregular circle”. “Verdant” is “green with vegetation”.

Now, the reason I must extricate myself from this 29 year relationship is because there have been a plethora (bunch) of words added to our living English language. “CD-ROM”, for example. I have CD-ROM in my computer and my dictionary doesn’t know what it means. “Codswallop”, by the way, means “nonsense”.

Frankly, I’ve thought of parting with the old comrade for a long time. But then I remember that we’ve been through a lot together. For example, I’ve referred to it for hyphenation, punctuation, conjugation and delineation. Transformation from old to new will never be commodious (convenient). But, alas, the time has come that I must relegate to the limbo of all forgotten things my original 1966 *Random House Dictionary of the English Language - The Unabridged Edition*.

I think, now, finally, at last, I have the pluck, the spunk, the mettle, to say adieu, adios, auf Wiedersehen. Yes, it has quite a complete section of synonyms, not to mention foreign language translations. It also has a chronological listing of major events of World History (up to 1966), several pages of signs and symbols, the lakes and deserts and islands of the world, numerous charts and graphs and maps (many outdated), and the ever-applicable Constitution of the United States. It’s really got everything a guy could ask for, conveniently packaged in those familiar 2059 pages, that fit nicely on the wrought iron stand behind my chair.

And, you know somethin’? It has more words in it than I’m ever gonna need! And somebody went to the trouble of alphabetizing them, too. So what if it doesn’t have a definition of “multimedia” or “CD-ROM”? That’s codswallop! I could care less! Thank goodness I became cognizant of the illumination (saw the light) before it was too late. My trusty *Random House* merits exculpation. It is I who deserves castigation! Repudiate the aforesaid! Spare the tome! Friends — **the dictionary stays!!** And, furthermore, it’s punctilious!

*The Story Man*



*“Many” years ago would be how many? 10 or 15? Using that as a frame of reference for what “many” years ago could be, I’m going to recollect some experiences from the past that will start from many, many, many years ago. Not quite back to the dark ages, but back to my youth, which might be considered the translucent ages. These recollections result from a recent visit to the old hometown. The place where I was born and learned how to teeter-totter and hike a football. It’s where I went to Sunday School, broke my clavicle, took algebra, learned to type, had my first kiss and played a cornet.*

**In other words, it’s where  
The Story Man  
Grew Up - More or Less**

The old hometown is Odebolt, Iowa. It’s 100 miles east northeast of Omaha and about 60 miles east and a little south of Sioux City, which is 60 miles almost straight north of Omaha, Nebraska, but Sioux City is in Iowa, and is 50 miles southeast of Yankton, South Dakota. To help you pinpoint it further, Odebolt is maybe 12 miles north and a little east of Kiron and a little south and west of Sac City, Iowa, which would put it probably 20 miles northeast of Schleswig, as the crow flies - or as the flies crow - as the case may be.

This most recent visit was to join in the celebration of the second annual “Odebolt Creek Days”, named for the town and the natural fissure that runs through it. That fissure has been known to be inadequate for the task sometimes, and when it over-flows, nearby low-lying cellars become indoor ponds. For most of the year, however, it efficiently does its job of carrying the residue of rain water from the fields south of town, into, through and out the north end of town. Eventually, it gets mixed into the waters of the Boyer heading west to the muddy Missouri, then south and east through St. Louis into the mighty Mississippi and, finally, all the way south into the Gulf of Mexico. That’s a pretty impressive journey for the fluid from the Odebolt “crick”, as we used to call it.



Anyway, a few of the hometown folks decided they needed to have a summer celebration that would give the natives a reason to host a weekend party for those of us who had moved on. Having had a go at it last year, they were confident that this Second Annual could be made bigger and better by sending invitations to every graduate of the high school to come back for an all-years’ reunion. It worked! There were six or seven hundred returning Odeboltonians, a number that increased the population for the weekend by more than 50%. The oldest graduate present, was of the class of 1922. The class with the largest representation was from 1961. All of that became known at the dinner and show, staged at the school on Friday night. I was honored to be recruited by the organizers as the master of ceremonies for the evening, which meant introducing a dignitary or two and some very fine local talent for entertainment. *The Odebolt Chronicle* reported the following week that “a good time was had by all.”

Getting there from L.A. is half the fun of going, if your idea of fun is changing airplanes in Dallas after a four-hour wait, and landing in Omaha amidst bolts of lightning that are the precursor to a night-long series of sirens warning of an impending tornado. It impended, but other than a lot of window-rattling thunder, torrential rains and those violent electrical displays to the west, it didn’t amount to much. That is to say, we didn’t get “twistered”.

That was on a Thursday night, so the next morning the two hour drive, east northeast to Odebolt, began. It’s an interesting route through a small hunk of the heartland that I’ve traveled hundreds of times. After a few miles north on the Interstate out of Omaha, the remaining 80 miles is on a narrow, two lane highway that actually goes through the mainstreets of all the little towns; Missouri Valley, Logan, Woodbine, Dunlap, Dow

City, Denison, Deloit and Kiron. I memorized the itinerary and geography through the windows of many a car and dozens of Greyhound bus rides. If challenged, I could recite those towns, backwards.

Because of the rain of recent days and the downpour from the night before, the old Boyer River, along which U.S. Highway 30 runs, was way over its banks and the flood waters covered acres and acres of rich, black Iowa farmland that, given time, was on its way to producing this fall's bountiful harvest of corn and soy beans. Not anymore! Mother Nature overruled Father Time!

The first view of Odebolt is from about three miles south of town. There's a bit of a rise in the road that gives a commanding view across the fertile fields and the hills and dales that are the farm lands of Iowa. There, in the distance, visible over the trees that surround the cemetery, are the four 10-story high grain elevators that'll hold the crops, come picking time. Those concrete silos, later, will unload that bounty into the trains and trucks that will get it to the food processors all across the country.

Every time I drive by the cemetery I'm reminded of my own labors there. For many years (10 or 15?), after my Dad retired from 30 years in the post office, he was the proud caretaker of those several acres and, for a few of those years, I was available to assist. Occasionally, I found myself, shovel in hand, four, five and, ultimately, six feet down. In those days a small town cemetery didn't have high-dollar motorized diggers. It was all muscle and sweat, except in the winter when you wondered if you'd freeze down in that pit and, come the spring thaw, they'd just throw the dirt back in on you.

So driving by that well-groomed, tree-lined landmark, I remembered again the times that I gave my Dad a hand in amongst the stones that marked the final resting places of those who were a part of the 119 year history of Odebolt, Iowa. There's a stone marker there now that identifies the burial site of the two dear people whose union gave me life. With the passage of time there are also many, many and many and one more "many", other such markers for all those who were a part of the years of my youth in that little town that is now plainly visible, just a half mile further north, past the nursing home to the east.

In this treatise, if you've been paying attention, you may have noticed that I've incorporated a trait common to the folks from that part of the country. They are very conscious of the compass. Nothing is "an hour that way" or "go a mile and take a right". You want to know where something, someplace or somebody is? You'd better know your directions! He, she or it, is "a mile-and-a-half south of the swimming pool", or "east of town just north of the old Beeler place". Simple instructions might include:



“hang the picture 4 inches west of the east edge of the dresser on the south wall of the north bedroom”. As an infant you learned that east was to the right of north and your teddy bear was south of your Gerber’s.

Many of us out-of-towners had no lodging available from family or friends and Odebolt is without an Inn. So, what’s a tourist to do? Get your room booked early at the “Delux Motel” in Ida Grove, 12 miles to the west. That beats having to commute all the way from Storm Lake, 30 miles to the north. There wasn’t a room available within 60 miles in any direction, I’m told.

As the weekend “Creek Days” continued, there was a pancake breakfast at the fire station on Saturday morning, followed by a one-hour parade that afternoon. Mrs. Story Man accompanied me in the Grand Marshall’s horse-drawn buggy on that organized trek, south and east, through the streets and over the creek, past grandmother’s house we did go. Along the one-mile route, anyone who wasn’t in the parade lined up to watch it, and every one of them, including little kids, stood, with hand over heart, as the Color Guard came into view. I know, because we were right behind the flag in our buggy, drawn by a beautiful team of horses and driven by a young, recently discharged, U.S. Navy man who’d spent 5 years seeing the north, south, east and west of the world. In a pre-parade moment I asked him if, in all the countries where he’d spent time, he had found one that he particularly liked. “Yes”, he said. “The United States of America!”



We paraded down the Main Street business part of town which, sadly, has more



abandoned and boarded-up buildings than bustling businesses. The formal procession of trucks and tractors and floats and kids concluded at the southeast end of town, after passing through my old neighborhood. My house is gone. It was old when I lived in it. But the one that stands there now didn't seem to me to be a worthy replacement. Our east side of town, like all of the residential areas, is looking good.

The Sunday Morning Catholic/Protestant Community Church Service at the high school concluded a wonderful 48 hours of revived memories, one of which is that such an ecumenical gathering would not have taken place when I lived there those many, many; well, you know, years ago. Interdenominational cooperation has proven to be a good thing. And, by the way, as I observed those with whom I shared my youth, I noticed that my generation now looks and acts like our mothers and fathers. And that's not all bad, either.

Meanwhile, seeing the younger generation(s) in that little town renews my faith in the future. We were witness to a display of civic pride and civility that manifests a respect for family, each other, each other's property and the flag of the United States; not to mention your basic midwestern courtesy and generosity toward guests. Oh yes, I was very proud of my hometown that Sunday afternoon as we headed south, past the cemetery, out of Northwest Iowa back to Southern California, where we all worry and wonder about "the family", "character" and "values". Let me tell you, folks, they are alive and well . . .and living in Odebolt, Iowa!

*The Story Man*

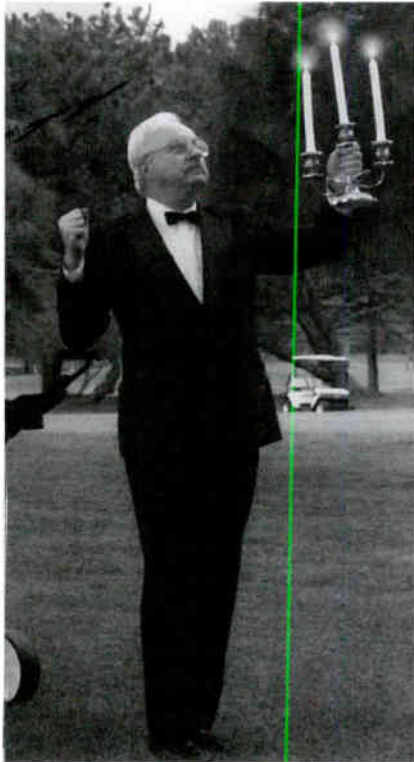


PHOTO BY JOHN TORREY

*Because so many of our laws come from the ancient Romans, and because the official language of the ancient Roman Empire was Latin, now whereas and therefore: nota bene, certiorari, pro bono ab initio a bona fide ex post facto voir dire res ipsa loquitor deminimus. That's stringing together a bunch of lawyer jargon - Latin legalese (or legal Latinese) - that kinda' says, you have been informed and should note well that, from the beginning, for the good of all, the facts speak the truth for themselves, even on minor matters.*

*If it doesn't mean that, remember, errare humanum est; or, in our language, "to err is human". And, boy, when it comes to Latin, I am humanum!*

***Non Sequitur Inter Alia  
bi***

***Historia Masculus***  
or, loosely *ipso facto* translated,  
**Random Thoughts,  
Among Other Things**  
by  
**The Story Man**

In other words, from stream-of-consciousness to closely-held and long-standing

convictions, this is a *compendium* (from the Latin; *compendere*) which, itself, can mean a “list of brief items” which, thus, could be *redundant* (from the Latin; *redundere*) when used in *conjunctio* with *inter alia*. Ladies and gentlemen, this very *paragraph* (no, that's from the Greek; *paragraphos*) is an example of *non sequitur inter alia*! Now that you understand Latin, let's *continuate*.....

My Mother was a High School English Teacher with a working knowledge of Latin. She believed that a basic understanding of Latin was vital to a greater understanding and appreciation for English. I took a year of Latin in high school. That's where I learned how to conjugate verbs (I think that's what we did to verbs). As I recall, that particular exercise had nothing to do, however, with determining the length of the vertex of an Isosceles Triangle. Also, I can now admit I never mastered - alright, I didn't even understand - either exercise. Likewise, I had a problem with “coefficients”, “quadratic equations”, “ionic bonds”, “the kinetic theory of gasses” and “ending sentences with prepositions”. Typing and Talking I was pretty good at. I “lettered” in Football and Music and, by the time I was a sophomore, I would have gotten “honors” in *Stoic* (from the Latin; *stoicus*), if such personality traits were recognized and rewarded.

It took awhile, but eventually, and with some persuasion by the faculty, I learned to be *quiet* (from the Latin; *quiet*) and to be *interested* (from the Latin; *interesse*) in the thoughts and writings of *others* (from the Lithuanian; *antras*).

Maybe that explains why I like autobiographies and books of quotes. I have also pinned and taped to the wall behind my computer a collection of observations and spoken thoughts that are posted for on-going reference. I've gotten so accustomed to them hanging there that I forget to take the time now and then to read my wall and recall why I put those quotes there in the first place.

This personal billboard began 10 years ago when Mrs. Story Man gave me a plaque with inspiring words of reassurance that she felt were appropriate at that time. I had just ended a professional partnership of 25 years and this piece, “The Man Who Dares”, concludes: “(He) who will alter his course when he must....and keeps trying and doing his best....is the man who knows how to succeed”.

Want more inspiration? Come on along, because next is the “Prayer of St. Francis”. We all know this one: “Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; doubt, faith; despair, hope; darkness, light; sadness, joy. It is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned...”.

Under that is a quote from Theodore Roosevelt. In part, it reads: “Success....comes to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, from bitter toil, and who

out of these wins the ultimate triumph.”

Moving left to right across the wall, we come next to a clipping entitled, “Strive for Perfection - Or Else!” Did you know that if 99.9% were good enough, “there would be 22,000 checks deducted from the wrong accounts every 60 minutes.” “12 babies would be given to the wrong parents each day.” “2,488,200 books would be shipped, every 12 months, with the wrong cover.” Those are but 3 of 25 startling statistics about the consequences of imperfection just 1/10th of 1% of the time.

Under those bits of amazing revelations is a reprint of a “Dear Abby” column, “A Prayer For Children”. It goes on at considerable length, and some of it can be cute and amusing: “We pray for children who can never find their shoes, who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions and whose smiles can make us cry”.

But, too often these prayers will break your heart: “We pray for children who are born in places we wouldn’t be caught dead in; who never saw a circus; who can’t find any bread to steal”. There are 40 short little prayers, including the one that goes: “We pray for the children whose pictures aren’t on anybody’s dresser.”

Suspended by tape from the bottom of Dear Abby’s piece is a quote from columnist George Will: “An obsession with longevity distracts us from our duty to live well”. I must have been in a state of reflective and somber awareness of my own mortality when I wrote, under Mr. Will’s quote, the following paragraph from a book, “How We Die: Reflections on Life’s Final Chapter”, by Sherwin B. Nuland, surgeon and surgical writer: “Medicine has a job to do, but nature does too and will do it, medicine be damned. Nature’s job is to send us packing so that subsequent generations can flourish!” I can live with that.

Under that sobering thought I wrote a quote that I know not to whom to attribute it...to...whom. Perhaps Socrates, about life and “the struggle between reason and passion.” Are we destined to “struggle between truth, justice and the improvement of the soul and, on the other hand, the lust for riches and glory, and the condoning of rash and remorseless assaults?”

I need to read my wall more often. I’m reminded of the words of John Wooden, UCLA basketball coach: “**Reputation** is what people think we are. **Character** is what we really are”. My wall-full of thoughts, and the ability to **quote** them - maybe that’s “**reputation**”. **Living** them is “**character**”!

There’s a book, “French or Foe” by Polly Platt, American, who lived long in France. She writes of the French people: “Things must be enjoyed, appraised, discussed

and judged; nothing is too great or small to escape a verdict. And then, after the serious discussion, bring out the champagne - which is just as *serious* (from the French; *serieux*).” In any language, it is, indeed, important to enjoy, appraise, discuss and judge. And then *celebrate* (from the Latin; *celebratus*)!

And so, “*Res judicata*”. That’s what those ancient Romans said, and our laws repeat, in English. It’s the legal term for “*The final decision*”! My *Mater*, the English teacher, understood “*res judicata*”. She wrote: “Live each moment to the fullest, for that is all you have! *Carpe Diem*” (enjoy the day)! To that, Mom, I’ll plead, *Nolo contendere*.

*The Story Man*

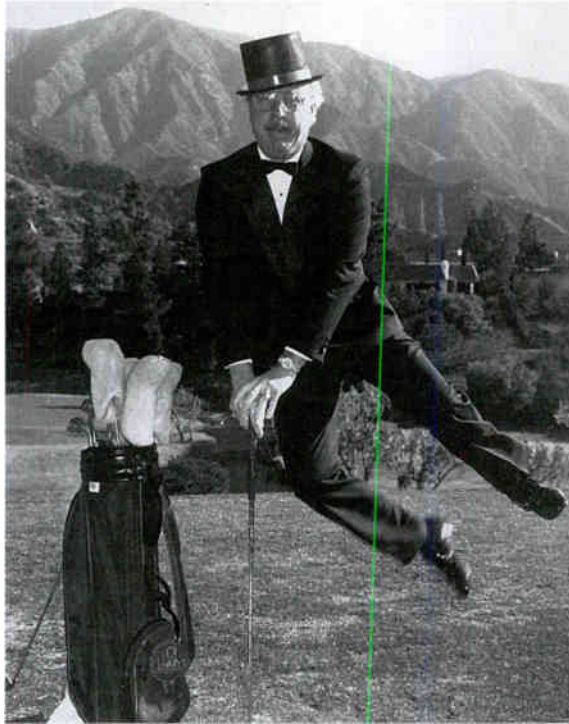


PHOTO BY LAURIE WELCH

*In show business, and in life generally, the expression “break a leg” means “good luck”! “do well”! Scholars who study the derivation of things, I’ll call them phraseologists, say that the original of that declaration started in Germany as “break your neck and leg”. That would lead me to conclude that the ultimate utterance for wishing someone happiness and success would be, “break every bone in your body”.*

*Good fortune in the theatre is sometimes called a “break”. Here’s an interesting conundrum: “As an understudy she got her break when the star broke her leg”. Now, you got to wonder, who had the good luck? On the contrary, when someone you don’t like is about to perform, or embark on a mission, would you say, “Don’t hurt yourself!”?*

*If actual leg and bone breakage means having “done well”, then:*

### The Story Man is one Lucky Guy!

It all began as a 10 year old. We kids were playing tackle football on the expanse of grass between the Methodist Church and Reverend Johnson’s parsonage. The Reverend’s son was one of the kids. It was his bruising tackle that brought me down, hard, on my right shoulder. I should imagine that the pain was immediate and



excruciating. I don't especially recall that it was, but considering that I had just broken my clavicle, it seems natural to assume that there was considerable pain.



The pain, however, was in my upper arm, not the collarbone itself. X-rays of the right arm showed no break. I went about my daily pursuits with gritted teeth and an immobile arm. Two days later, as I was chasing friends on the school's fire escape, I slipped. The natural reaction was to catch myself before imprinting my face with the design on one of the cast iron steps. As I reached out and stopped my fall, my collar bone completely separated and a shard end suddenly was visible under the skin.

New x-rays confirmed the extent of the injury and my arm was placed in a sling that secured my right hand over the top of my left shoulder to stabilize the area of the break. Maybe, by now, someone has figured out a way to put a cast on a broken clavicle, but in those days, with just the cloth sling, it took a long time to mend. The arm-over-shoulder configuration lasted for several weeks and my incapacitation and discomfort level had to be extreme.

It was probably about this same time that I was convinced my bicycle riding talents were sufficient to assure me success in a "see-how-fast-you-can-go-and-how-close-you-can-come-to-a-parked-car" game. In those days, some car models had outside door handles that actually came to a point. This isn't pretty, folks, but I won the competition when I came to a very sudden stop, having impaled myself, by my arm, on

the door handle of a '47 Pontiac. When I pulled myself free, I could look through the hole in my arm. It wasn't until some few stitches later in the doctor's office that the excruciating pain set in.

Next came "school-sanctioned" football. No more dangerous sandlot pick-up-games. As a 7th grade player, now equipped with pads and helmet, I took a knee to an area where there were no pads. The chest! Ribs broken: three! Any movement was, here's that word again; excruciating. Even non-movement, now that I think about it. Breathing hurt! Everything hurt. For some reason, blinking hurt. And, again, no plaster cast for that part of the anatomy. This time it was long strips of wide tape wrapped very tightly around my entire body. The changing-of-the-tape was a ceremony that required the doctor to rip the strips off in one very fast motion. It felt like scalding water was being poured on my entire midsection.

Then there was the time I was carrying a heavy wastebasket down a flight of stairs at my sister's house and, of course, I tripped. At the bottom of the stairs the metal rim of the basket made contact with the bridge of my nose. The basket won! Excruciating? Well, I should say. It'll bring tears to your eyes. No stabilizing plaster confinement for this one either. Just tape and time and nature will put a nose back together again.

My football-playing days continued. In high school we had more and better pads and helmets. I was the starting center on offense (I was going to say, "starting offensive center", but I can see where that would lead to unkind jokes, at my expense). In those days we went "both ways", so I was a linebacker on defense. No broken bones about it, but I did wrench my back while making a tackle. And I was bloodied a few times, and had the wind knocked out of me on occasion. It's probably a good thing that I didn't turn "pro".

What are the odds of breaking something while hosting a television show? And a Game Show, at that! The show was *Name Droppers*, circa 1970, NBC daytime. The set consisted of two "host" areas. My partner, Al Lohman, would be seated with celebrity guests and I would stand in the studio audience area with the contestants. Simple and safe enough, one would think. While moving with my portable microphone toward a contestant, my foot slipped on the carpeted step and I sat down very, very hard on the edge of another carpeted step. Live, on television, I



broke by coccyx! However, I was true to the business. I hopped right back up, laughed and joked about my clumsiness and proceeded with my part of the show. All the while, the pain was - oh, I'd say, excruciating.

Once again, friends, there is no way to put a cast on your coccyx, which by the way, is "the bottom end of the vertebral column". In other words, it's the tailbone. There is no way to put that in a sling. The only treatment for a broken one of those? Pain pills, Mother Nature and Father Time.

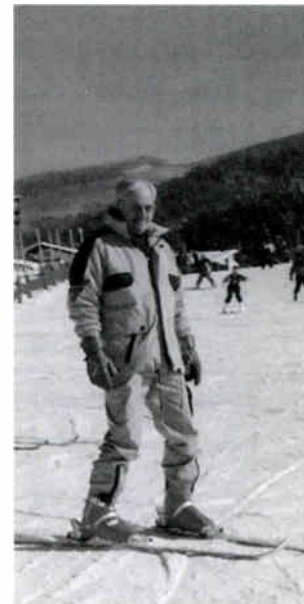
Another memory, another studio at NBC. Rehearsals for *The Lohman and Barkley Variety Show* are in full swing. I suddenly had an inspiration! I suggested to the producer that I do a silly spoof of musical films by singing the song, "I'll Build A Stairway To Paradise". My performance would feature the singing of the song while climbing up a ladder. The ladder was supported by a base with little wheels on it. It's what the lighting crew used for adjusting the overhead banks of TV studio illumination.

"Here, let me demonstrate", I offered. I began on the bottom step and with each note of the song moved up a rung. At the top of the ladder, I positioned my feet on the outside of the supporting columns, into which the rungs are placed, and so positioned, slid down the ladder, hit the floor with my right foot at an angle, and broke my ankle. Really bad! And you know what the pain was. The "e" word - with a capital "E". There's a hospital next door to NBC in Burbank, and for this fracture they actually had a cast. And a wheelchair and crutches.

I suppose I could also mention that in 1993 I went skiing for the third time in my life and broke a bone in my right hand, bruised my nose and right cheekbone, and tore ligaments in my right knee. Folks, these were three separate accidents! On the same day!

The next experience is the most painful of all! The reason is that the consequences of my own clumsiness, accident-proneness, and inattention, are put in proper perspective.

I was at a small radio station in Southern Minnesota, preparing to go to a car dealership on the edge of town for a remote broadcast. The preparation included carrying very heavy equipment down a flight of stairs (yes, stairs again), to the mobile unit for transport to the car dealer's showroom. While bent over, lugging the back end of a long table, my



foot slipped, I twisted, and, in the that instant, excruciating pain shot through my lower back. I had just dislocated the juncture of my sacrum and ilium.

Again, the show went on. I could only change position with assistance. Alone, I couldn't move. The next day I was hospitalized and put in traction for a week. In the basement of that hospital there was a big, cold, black table onto which one is placed when one is having an x-ray of one's sacroiliac. I had been gently placed thereupon and the technician was about to position the equipment over my lower back when, suddenly, the door burst open and an emergency room physician announced, "we need the table". I was removed, hastily and without regard for my condition, and re-seated in my wheelchair at the edge of the x-ray table.

At that moment two more people entered the room. One was a nurse, the other was a husky, young Minnesota farmer carrying a limp, little body, with extremities dangling over his cradling arms. Maybe a 3 year-old. A little girl. His daughter! As she was placed on the x-ray table the man, stammering and crying, was saying, "Oh, God! Oh, God! I didn't see her. I was backing the tractor . . . ."

Right in front of me were her little feet, in red and blue tennis shoes, tied with green shoe laces, and peeking out from under her striped coveralls. The doctor leaned over her and placed his stethoscope to her chest. He moved it up and down. Then, round and about. There was not a sound in that room. Not a single sound!

While removing the stethoscope from his ears and repositioning it around his neck, the doctor raised himself to a full standing position. He turned to look directly into the questioning eyes of the young father. The doctor's face expressed what the slow back and forth movement of his head confirmed. Finally, someone broke the silence. It was the nurse, putting words to the visual message. "I'm sorry", she said. "There's nothing we can do."

It was a moment of such profound impact that the "excruciating" pain in my back was suddenly made inconsequential. It didn't go away, but it no longer seemed to matter. In that instant - my heart stood still. For eternity - so would the little girl's!

This is the first time I've shared this story. I can't see what I'm writing - but tears don't blur feelings:

Sticks and stones . . . and all my broken bones . . . can never hurt me!

*The Story Man*



PHOTO BY JOHN TORREY

*By the time we heard that O.J. Simpson was being charged with the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman on June 12, 1994, we were several months into putting the memory of the Northridge earthquake into a subconscious chamber in the cylinder of our mind, there to be triggered by scores of aftershocks from the original occurrence. Each little movement of the ground fired anew the fears that come with living on an unstable sublunary table.*

**The Story Man  
Northridge and O.J.  
A Spatial Relationship  
A Quake And A Fake**

Earthquake morning, January 17, 1994, like all weekday mornings, I was nearing the end of my drive to work, passing under the Santa Monica Freeway, at 4:26 a.m. I was aware of the time because I was a few minutes ahead of my usual schedule. At 4:31 a.m. the Santa Monica Freeway collapsed onto the very route of my passage. Had I known at the time how close I came to possibly being flattened under tons of overpass concrete and steel, I too might have collapsed. Four of the five minutes between 4:26 and 4:30 was the time it took for me to arrive at the radio station. The final minute was



all I needed to get to the studio and inside the building. And that's when our terra lost its firma!

Being the first on the air, once things subsided and our auxiliary power kicked-in, presented a special challenge. It was important to remain cool, calm and reassuring while reporting this developing story - all the while wondering about the fate of my own family and neighborhood 25 miles east in the foothills below the Angeles National Forest. Even in today's age of "instant communications", the time between a disaster, natural or otherwise, and certain knowledge of its epicenter and human impact, is frustratingly slow. I knew South La Cienega Boulevard had survived it.

I was feeling both hope and fear. My hope was that Mother Nature's incursion was focalized near us. My fear was that we were protected by considerable distance from where a major catastrophe had occurred. And that, of course, was the case. Eventually, as reports came in, our attention centered on the north San Fernando Valley, site of a direct seismic hit.

A few months later, on a Sunday in June, O.J. Simpson was returning from Chicago about to be the epicenter of an extended seismism of his own. The Santa Monica Freeway was almost up and running again with two overpasses reconstructed in record time. While the physical evidence of a sizable disaster can be obliterated, the emotional wounds cannot. We were stunned by the enormity of the damage and we grieved for those who lost their friends and loved-ones, without any thought given to their race, religion or nationality. At a time like that, who cares? Perhaps we should live our lives with a post-catastrophe mind-set. Why not? The reality of future calamities remain a part of our lives.

By June, the aftershocks were tamer, fewer and farther between. Eventually, the quake of Northridge will be a distant memory with limited consequences into the next century. Will the O.J. Simpson episode, likewise, fade away? These two occurrences beg to define the noun, "juxtaposition", "an instance of placing two or more (events) in a close spatial, or ideal relationship". So, let's juxtapose an earthquake and its discomfoting aftershocks with the societal fissure of the O.J. Simpson period.

From the former; remembrances of a freeway system broken and askew. A few months later we sit for hours, mesmerized by live pictures from above that same freeway system of a crayoliance of colored lights flashing atop a phalanx of vehicles, black and white, colors juxtaposed, to identify the law. This parade was led, as parades sometimes are, by a National Hero - in a slow-moving white Bronco.

These television images were just the beginning of hundreds, now chambered in



the minds of all who were witness to the astounding display of evidence and faces and emotions and characters over the next many months. Then, finally, a verdict!; vilified or celebrated along lines of color. Again, juxtaposed, black and white. An indelible moment for all who heard the words: “not guilty”.

Had this hero’s Bronco been crushed by collapsing concrete, help would have come to him with no regard for his fame, wealth or ethnicity. Those who cried “foul” at the jury’s verdict did not do so because of his celebrity, money or color. Those who cheered his freedom were emboldened by a defense team determined to paint a picture of a justice system, like the freeways of months before, that was broken and askew.

The scars of an earthquake can be repaired, and we who live in earthquake-scarred country do so with an uneasiness born of the awareness that a freeway may fall on us. We have no control over such “acts of God”. In the “Trial of the Century”, unfortunately, we saw a court accept “acts of man”; defense lawyers, long on reputation, short on character, using tactics that will scar society into the next millennium. A courtroom was used to manufacture, and the media was used to distribute, harangues designed to create distrust in our laws and their enforcement. The aftershocks are evident in an animosity that infects many among us, black and white, who thought we were immune. This damage, unlike an earthquake’s, tarnished civility.

For earthquake-related damage prevention and repairs we call on Structural Engineers. For a “tarnished civility” we need some Civil Engineers, as “civil” applies to “the relations of citizens, one with another”; to rebuild the bridges of trust that were severely weakened by the verbal temblors generated by defense lawyers during “impromptu” news conferences in front of the Criminal Courts Building and emanating from a particular courtroom above the corners of Temple and Broadway in downtown Los Angeles.

In juxtaposing the quake and O.J., the obvious conclusion is that nobody is guaranteed the fortunate discrepancy of a five minute leeway ‘neath a doomed freeway. At a time like that, survival is not determined by any of our physical attributes, but by pure dumb luck. However, a notable physical attribute did determine, in large measure, the outcome of Simpson’s trial. It was our great misfortune that his criminal guilt or innocence was not fairly determined by the facts, or lack thereof, presented to a jury of his peers.

Instead, in the many months between the earthquake and the verdict, the jury was led to believe that O.J. Simpson was more than mortal - he was black! Until the trial, for all we knew, his character was sufficient to make him the Poster Person for Tolerance and Civility - “an ideal relationship”. Not so ideal, however, is the juxtaposition of his

*reputation* which was fake, and at odds with his *character*. His celebrity belied his integrity.

We know the fear earthquakes cause, but who would have thought of fearing O.J. Simpson? 1994 shook us up in more ways than one.

***The Story Man***



*I had lunch the other day with a man for whom I once worked. He was 3 or 4 years shy of 50 at that time, and he was a “mover and shaker”, I haven’t seen him in over 30 years. He’s a cane-carrying 83 now. He moves slower, doesn’t shake, and our time together was a wonderful experience for both of us. We shared expressions of mutual admiration. We relaxed, reminisced and recollected memories of our years together and apart.*

*It was a wonderful re-connection that ended with a vow not to let 30 more years pass before we get together again. At one point, in the course of our conversation, he mentioned his participation as a fighter pilot in World War II. It was mentioned with no intention of getting into war stories. Just a little passing mention of an experience that most everyone of his generation was involved in. So, no big deal.*

*Speaking of wartime flying, I have a brother-in-law who also piloted one of the 80,000 aircraft that the U.S. had in its arsenal at the height of the war. These guys and their comrades of that era, in all branches of the military, deserve our everlasting gratitude.*

**Unashamed and Unabashed  
The Story Man  
Goes Patriotic**

As an adolescent, my awareness of the world at war was limited to overheard conversation among the townfolk, radio news at supertime, movie theatre newsreels and war movies, themselves. My direct contribution to the nationwide effort was saving pennies and dimes for the purchase of War Stamps and Bonds.

As a 7 year-old I had a little army suit that I'd wear around town, hoping that those who saw me would believe I was a real soldier, home on leave, before shipping out to some far-distant battlefield. Our weekly newspaper would report on the older hometown boys who really were on their way to war. Then, too often, it reported on those who wouldn't be coming back. Or, if they were, they'd be in the lead vehicle of a sad procession in their honor.



This exposure to the war would stir imaginings in tykes like me about battles at sea and storming the sands of Iwo Jima. My real world consisted of elementary school, sandlot football on the expanse of grass between the Methodist church and Reverend Johnson's parsonage, and neighborhood games of Cowboys and .... er...Native Americans.

Somehow, suddenly, it's 50 years later and I have the thrill of experiencing, in



person, a piece of WWII nostalgia. I squirmed myself into the converted backseat of a P-51 Mustang. While strapping myself in, I am reminded of an experience 20 years

earlier when I flew in that backseat of another warplane. My “chauffeur” back then was a U.S. Navy Captain named Smith. “Bear” Smith to his friends, and fellow F-4 Jet Fighter pilots. I was a passenger of a Navy Blue Angel.

Both flights, the privately owned P-51 Mustang, with Dick Pack at the controls, and the Navy’s F-4, were complete with “high performance” take offs (takes off?) and some thrilling dives and rolls and flips and . . . well, these were the ultimate in “E ticket rides”. When I was in the Army, prior to all that, I thought that a rough, off-road ride in a Jeep was thrilling.

In between those excursions aloft, I was invited to join a delegation of interested citizens for a personal tour of four U.S. Air Force Bases. Another time a group of us landed on the deck of the U.S.S. Enterprise, the world’s first nuclear powered aircraft carrier. We were by invitation, by the way, to observe a flotilla of warships, a hundred miles at sea, engaged in 48 hours of military exercises known as “war maneuvers”.

Next time you’re in the company of a guy around 70 or 80 ask him where he was in 1942 or 3 or 4. It’s a good bet he was doing something war-related, and maybe daring and terrifying. What stories they can tell! They are the ones who marched and flew and sailed - not for fun or show - but in a life or death defense of America itself.

If “old-fashioned patriotism” is out of favor in these cynical, late-cynical, late-century times, how about a “New-Fashioned patriotism” for the new millennium? A “politically correct” love of country, devotion to its ideals and a renewed commitment to strengthen the structure most vital to the future - The American Family.

Yes, friends, when I become your Presi. . . . oh, excuse me . . . I’ll save that for “The Story Man Throws-His-Hat-In-The-Ring” speech.

*The Story Man*



ILLUSTRATION BY ANGELA BARKLEY

*Alright, I admit it. I still get a “Gee Whiz” kind of feeling when I find myself in Hollywood at the corner of Sunset and Vine. I’ve been there hundreds of times in 35 years and it isn’t what it once was. Or, what I thought it once was. Or, was it ever? Most of “Tinseltown” has “tinselitis”. And it could use a face lift, a hair piece and a tummy-tuck too. Even just a good night’s sleep might help. So, what’s with this “gee whiz” business at Sunset and Vine?*

*Well, once-upon-a-long-time-ago, before, during and after the Second of World Wars, before there was national television, American families were entertained and informed by Network Radio. Many of those shows originated in far-off Hollywood, California, two thousand miles west of my little hometown.*

*References were sometimes made to the famous intersection of Sunset and Vine, which became, to my young mind, the heart of a world of voices that didn’t exist as flesh and blood, but just magically materialized when it was showtime. As a kid, hoping one day to be on the radio myself, the idea of just one visit to that fabled intersection was a far-distant daydream in both time and space.*

*Well, in this country, any dream can come true. But, once realized, do we cease to appreciate, and even forget those moments of fantasies fulfilled? I hope not!*



## The Story Man Remembers

The NBC studios were right there at Sunset and Vine. Just a couple of blocks east on Sunset was CBS. For a small-town, midwestern boy, who wanted to be on the radio, anything within a mile of that intersection was hallowed ground.

My family had encouraged the 17 years of accumulated *daydreams* that I took with me when I left home. Among them was one about being lucky enough someday to be on the radio in the big city - Des Moines! I didn't make it, friends! Well, not yet, at least. And luck, by the way, I've learned, most often comes to those who *dream* beyond probability and complement those *dreams* with hard work.

It was that combination, plus the offer of a job and my newly purchased 1961 Thunderbird, that got me/us to California. And not just anywhere in California. It wasn't Redding, Bishop or Sacramento. It was in the South of California, and not at the corner of Yucca and Ivar. What it was, was seven years, five radio stations and



many thousands of circuitous miles from 6th and Park Avenue in Odebolt, Iowa, to Sunset and Vine in Hollywood, California. Gee Whiz!!

And, just a little aside here, if I may: Today, halfway up Vine St. toward Hollywood Boulevard, is one of those “walk of fame stars”. My name is on it! Together with my former partner, Al Lohman. Imagine that! 1985 ended with a Lohman and Barkley Star! And right where NBC used to be. Only in America, folks! Well, actually, only in Hollywood.

When I arrived in California those many years ago, NBC, CBS and ABC still had their network radio studios clustered around Sunset and Vine. I soon became familiar with the territory of my childhood imaginings and was even befriended by a few of those whose voices had enthralled me in my youth.

Speaking of the old network radio days, one of my favorite shows was The Lone Ranger, with an introduction that included, in part, “return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear. From out of the past....”. Yesteryear’s thrilling days for me began in 1952. I was between my sophomore and junior year in high school and was chosen to compete with kids from other schools as a disc jockey on a nearby radio station. The competition was in the hosting of a three hour weekend program and encouraging the listeners to vote for you at 10 cents a vote. The money went to The March of Dimes, which at that time was fighting a battle, later to be won, against Polio.

I was among the 6 winning finalists who each then staged a “live variety show broadcast” before a panel of judges and an auditorium-full of audience. It was very exciting and my presentation came in second. First place, strangely enough, went to a girl who was the daughter of one of the radio station’s biggest advertisers. There was a dose of learning something about business and life in that outcome.

It was an experience, nonetheless, that convinced me I wanted to follow in my older brother’s footsteps and get into broadcasting. The only thing standing between me and my chosen profession were two, seemingly interminable years in high school.

I wondered and imagined and *dreamed* of how it would begin for me and where it would lead. Considering our modest financial circumstances it was important to get into the job market quickly. The family had to dig to the bottom of pretty shallow pockets to pay my initial tuition to a radio school in Minneapolis. It was to be the same 6-month course my brother had successfully completed 5 years earlier.

It wasn’t but 3 weeks into my schooling that I landed a job as a page boy at one of the nation’s great radio stations, WCCO in Minneapolis. It took two transfers on city

buses to get me from my rooming house near the radio school, to the station's studios downtown. Twice each day it was necessary to make that journey before and after my afternoon classes. These were long days for this 17 year-old, but such total involvement as student and actual employee, were the beginning realization that, with time and effort, *dreams* can come true.

I was unaware of it then, but those experiences surely began what became the reservoir from which, these many years later, tubs of tales are taken to keep *The Story Man* awash in narratives.

As *luck* would have it, I was a 5-month graduate of the radio school. The first, and maybe only such premature departee, and I was heading a few miles south for my first real announcer's job in Mankato, Minnesota, at KYSM AM and FM, 250 watts' worth, if you will. I wanted to walk down Mankato's main street, in the early months of my employment, and shout, "Hey, I'm a *radio* announcer. I'm a radio *announcer*! *I am a real live radio announcer!!* Gee Whiz! And I get paid to do it!" It was a dollar an hour in those days.



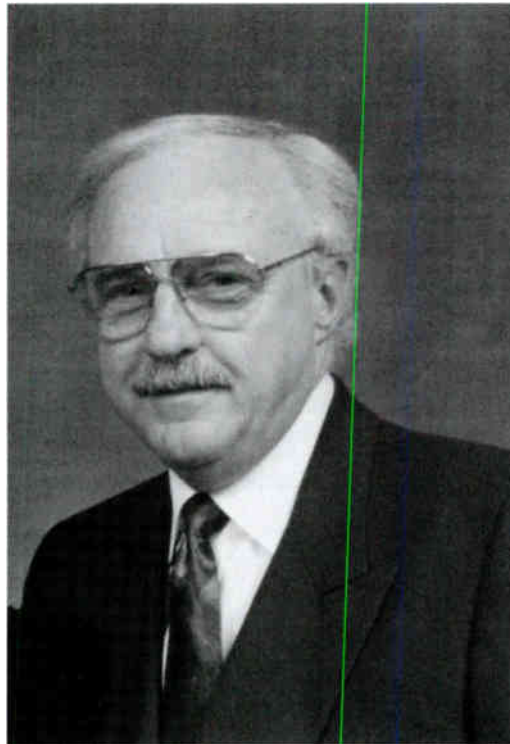
Another *dream* was to work at a radio station in a city with a college. Well that one came true with that very first job. Mankato had a large State Teacher's College. A young student at that college, one year later, became the future Mrs. Story Man.

With each succeeding stop and/or step along the way to Sunset and Vine, I had new cities to learn, new challenges to meet, new opportunities to master, new friends to make, new *dreams* fulfilled and, eventually, new stories to tell!

What a lovely adventure it has been. Good luck has been accompanied by good health along the way. And, oh yes, two wonderful children, grown up, and dreaming *dreams* of their own. I hope, with each one fulfilled, they'll pause to appreciate the wonder of it all and, if not say "Gee Whiz", at least think it!

How fortunate we are to live in a land where luck and labor can still conspire to fulfill the Grandest *Dream* of them all: *The American Dream!*

*The Story Man*



**The Story Man  
thinks about  
“Positive Good”**

*When the University of La Verne bestowed upon me an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree, I jokingly concluded, on the radio, that I am expected to write “humane letters”. And so it is with tenderness, compassion and sympathy that I write to my:*

Dear Fellow Americans:

While seated at the keyboard of my computer and surfing through my “Grolier” CD ROM Encyclopedia looking for information about Vicksburg, Mississippi, I came across American Civil War references that prompted me to look further into the events that led up to the firing on Ft. Sumter, So. Carolina, April 12, 1861, and the start of the war. In reference to the slavery issue, a quote from Grolier:

“From an uneasy mood over slavery, Southerners evolved a “positive good” philosophy and argued that slave owners provided shelter, food, care and regulation for a race unable to compete in the modern world without proper training.”

Is it possible to take the leap from “Southerners” (slave owners) and their defensive philosophy and apply it to our current federal welfare and entitlement system which is perpetuated, exacerbated and aggravated by a modern day “positive good” philosophy?

In today’s world the very government that fought to free the slaves is the “Southerner”. Now, welfare recipients of all ages, colors and nationalities are the slaves, caught up in the cycle of dependence for “shelter, food, care and regulation”, because they have not been given the “proper training” to be independent of their 20th Century slave owners in Washington, D.C.!

What this country needs is a Lincolnesque exponent of self-sufficient individuals, families and communities. A self-sufficiency that is still achievable in this country through education, training, cooperation and hard work. Without those elements our nation will be economically and morally insolvent within the first quarter of the next century. The Emancipator of America’s 21st century must have the leadership capabilities and courage to wage a philosophical war to end the welfare and entitlement system as it is currently practiced - and *demand*ed - by those able-bodied among us who benefit from the education, training, cooperation and hard work of others.

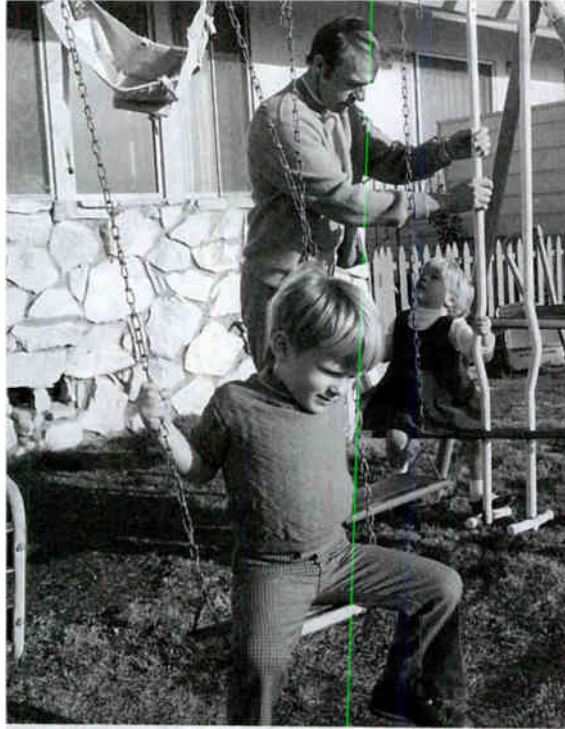
It will be an ideological “civil war”, if you will, between the states -- of two philosophies. In this civil war the “Confederacy” is the so-called “progressive” mentality in our federal government that defends the “positive good” of “shelter, food, care and regulation”, while increasing the number of those so enslaved. Ultimately, the Union cannot afford the cost of multiplying generations of untrained dependents and an “entitled” citizenry.

Our house, again, is seriously divided. It cannot stand, economically or socially, when those individuals elected by the people, become the Masters of the people by giving to the people an increasing “entitlement” from each crop of taxes picked from the pockets of some of the people then bailed and barged to Washington to pay the interest on phantom money borrowed from future people!

This is not for the “positive good” of those they’ve indentured and made “*unable to compete*”, but for the elected indenturers constantly competing to return to the perpetuation of their private power at the Plantation on the Potomac!

*The Story Man*





*The most difficult aspect of being a contributor to a regularly-scheduled publication is finding the inspiration at the right moment to come up with something worth contributing. The difficulty is compounded by the desire to contribute something that relates to the season of the year or some other significant occurrence at the time of publication. At this time of the year there are several events of significance that occur -- Armed Forces Day, Flag Day, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and for our Canadian friends, Victoria Day. And, oh yes, Father's Day.*

*Three years ago at this time of the year I wrote about my own Father. I was exposed to their example-setting parenting for over 50 years. In those two reminiscences I wrote as a son. This time --*

### **The Story Man is Dad**

My first and most important bit of advice to all Dads is:

Be nice to your kids. Remember, they'll choose your nursing home.

What ultimately makes a successful Dadhood worthwhile is the eventual



achievement of Grandadhood. Those who've been there before will tell you how grand such hood is, but until you get there yourself, you have no idea. I've been three and half years exposed to that joy, named Jared. And now, as that veteran "Bapa", I have a new little light in my life, Tyler Christopher Barkley, who joined the family just six weeks ago.

Now, both daughter and son have made a contribution to the continuation of the human race. The question we ask is one that every generation before us has asked: What sort of world awaits these two little innocents? And, oh, how I want them to enjoy the years of their innocence as "novices in the ways of the world". ("Novices in the ways of the world", I like that. And, it's the first time I've ever quoted a man named Fred Whishaw.)



We are fortunate to live within a few minutes of both grandchildren. We have the opportunity to see them frequently and to be occasional baby-sitters, as well. So, watching them grow through each stage of early life, is one of the great delights of being one generation removed from total, on-going responsibility.

Those years were precious, too. They were the years of being Dad for two little babies who too quickly became grown-ups. It's not that I don't enjoy them in their adulthood, too; it's just that their adulthood means that somehow I aged beyond the point of ever again being recruited as a *young* Republican. Come to think of it, I wasn't recruited when I *was* young - by any party. (I've always wanted to make a moot point; as in "a point deprived of practical significance". I think I just did.) And, by the way, I don't know who Fred Whishaw is or was, either.

Here are the things I most enjoyed about being the "Dad" through the various stages of our kids' development. In their very early years I enjoyed having a "Mom" around to change their diapers. I enjoyed that a lot. Thanks Ms. Story Wife.

I enjoyed hearing them gurgle and laugh. Some day I must ask them if they enjoyed



hearing me gargle and cough? (I was a smoker, back then.) I got a kick out of watching them do their first roll-over from back to tummy and then back to back. I would say it was even fun watching them crawl, stand, walk and run. I didn't mind a bit, when I'd feel a tug in the night as one or both of them wanted to climb over me to get to the middle of our bed.

I never felt that anything the kids wanted to do was an inconvenience. I didn't mind taking them to movies, roller skating, horse riding and ball games.

Later, I didn't even mind having to go back late at night to pick them up after their pre-driving evening's activities.

Excuse me, but I wonder if Fred Whishaw is or was a father.

Enjoying our childrens' accomplishments, be they major or minor, was a highlight of my Daddyhood. I remember talking to God in those days. "Please, God," I'd whisper, "don't let him strike-out! Don't let her fall off her horse. Get them back home safely. Don't let him break a bone on the football field. Don't let her heart be broken in romance." I could go on and on! But what parent can't? I'm sure we're all in frequent touch with God where our kids are concerned, no matter their age. And where my kids, and now grandkids are concerned, I have one all-encompassing prayer, "Please, God, keep them well and safe!"

I've quoted in these pages before from "A Prayer for Children" that Dear Abby published in her newspaper column some years ago. It was a lengthy list of pleadings that included, "We pray for children who *want* to be carried and for those who *must* be. Whose smiles can make us cry. And we pray

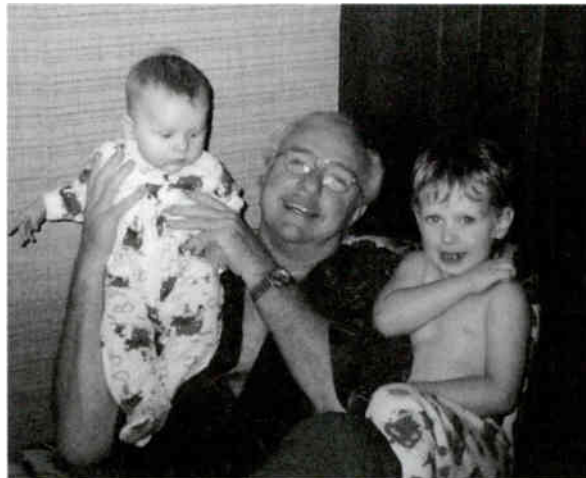


for those whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser".

Not only dressers, but most of the flat horizontal surfaces in our house have provided space for the display of the visual record of an evolving family, now joined by new pictures of new lives in the arms of those who love them.

Our kids' pictures are also tucked into cellophane sleeves in two rows of photo albums that are actually organized, categorized and labeled. That was a rainy weekend project of several years ago. Those many pages, with hundreds of photographs are the first treasure I'd remove if my house were threatened by fire or flood. They record the sweet memories of fun family-times and important occasions in our shared lives. They are the story of my Daddyhood.

One first learns to be a father by the way he was fathered. Being the third of three children, my Dad had pretty well honed his skills, so I was fortunate to have had a good example to use when my turn came. We refine our own fathering skills as we father. You really get the hang of it about the time the kids leave home.



For most of us, at some point after they move out, they move back in. In time, if they're lucky, they'll leave home again and eventually take unto themselves a spouse. It is at that moment that the reality of God's Grand Plan really hits home. A new two-some with the potential to join the next generation of Dads. That is as it has always been and forever will be. Amen.

As our kids married, and as my hands-on fatherhooding was ebbing, I shared with them a poem their Grandmother, My Mom, wrote about marriage. It concluded:

*"May Heaven Bless the home you'll make,  
May love and joy abound  
And happiness and comfort  
within its walls be found"*

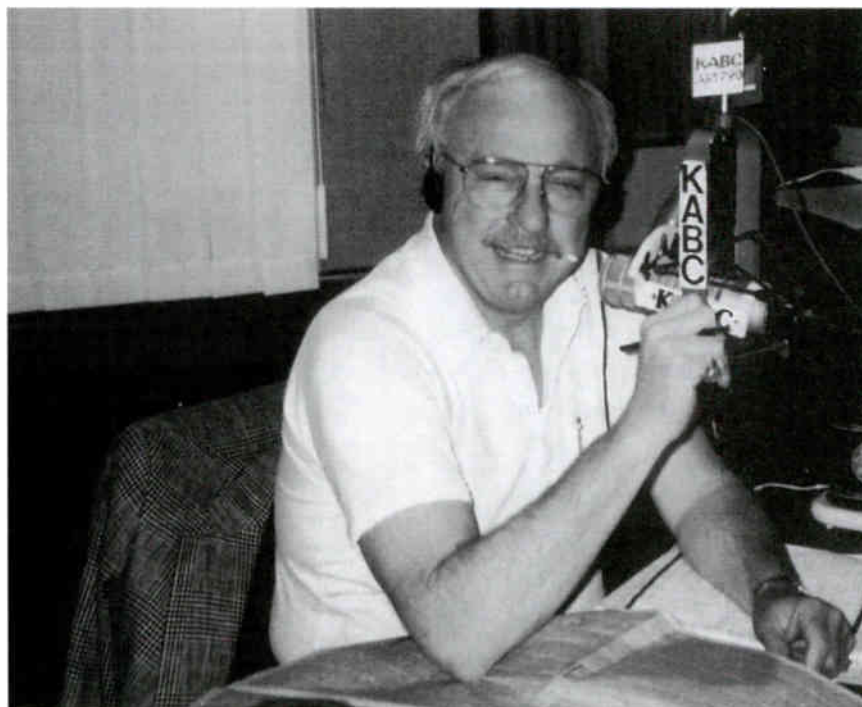
Then I felt compelled to emote a bit with some final fatherly thoughts of my own:

*"On your wedding day my tears will be tears of pride in the adults you are, not tears of sadness over the loss of the little ones you were. Those little ones will live in my memory, but your continued happiness will be in my heart. I have been so lucky to have you in my life and now to share in the joy of your future."*

Thank you, God, for answering past and present prayers, They are as fine a son and daughter as ever a Dad has had. That's why mine will be a Happy Father's Day!

I hope yours will be too.

***The Story Man***



*Once upon a 1954, there was this 17 year-old lad, full of dreams and wonderment who went off to Minneapolis on a hot June day, to begin the schooling that would prepare him for a career in broadcasting. He took with him both the enthusiasm and the uncertainty that comes with a new adventure. And the naivete that accompanies anyone on such a journey - leaving the simple life of a small town for exposure to the big city and a future - unknown.*

**Today is September 13, 1996. Today, that lad, now 60, after finishing his umpteenth thousandth radio show, was invited into the boss' office to be . . . terminated! Released! Given His Walking Papers! Excused From Further Service! Let Go! Dismissed Early From A Career! And Sent Home!**

**If irony is "a state of affairs that is the reverse of what was", then this is irony - this is life - and this sucks!**

**The Day  
The Story Man  
was  
Fired!**

Actually, it took three bosses, a female and two guys, about 5 minutes to do the



deed. My immediate reaction was to say, "So this is how my career ends!" And I think to myself: *I know that employment opportunities decrease exponentially with each year over the age of 40. "Exponentially"? Big word to flash into my mind.*

"It doesn't have to be the end of your career", one of them offered. *Easy for him to say. He's young. And has a job.*

"Well, thank you, folks!" *A little sarcasm for you.* "This is a nice birthday present," I said. *Ah ha! Nervous glances amongst the three of them.* "I just turned 60 two days ago. That's probably why this is happening."

"Oh, no ... no, no!" They protest in unison. From one comes, "Age has nothing to do with it!"

"Then why am I being fired?" *That seemed to me to be the next logical question.*

Another of the trio answered. "You know that we've lost some of our younger listeners. We have to turn that around with more humor and faster pacing."

*I thought to myself: that sure sounds to me like an age-related firing. When in doubt, fire the "old" guy. I was always the "kid" at the radio stations where I worked. When did that change? Must've been sometime in the 70's and 80's and I was too busy to notice.*

As we all stood there, they showing proper concern and remorse, and me in a state of shock, I repeated out loud to myself, "God, just like that? This ends 42 years for me in this business!"

No comment from any of them. *They could little care about my future in or out of the business. They just want me out of their business.* The firing was over. "Good luck", she said, which seemed to indicate their task was done and the meeting was over. I left the building.

The drive home this morning has been like being lost in a time/space continuum. It could have taken me 30 minutes or 6 hours. Nothing seemed to move at any recognizable speed. My mind was racing about the present and the future, and yet, recollecting the past all at the same time. I've had a line that I've used for years - "Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once!" And yet, on the drive home, following the firing, every thought, it seemed, was happening at once.

*What things must I do and in what order should I do them? Get out of the lease on*



*this expensive car somehow! What radio station might possibly need somebody? Nila's in Newport Beach picking up a lithograph we bought in Hawaii. She's in her expensive car! Holy Smokes, how do I break the news to her. What do I do first? Do I tell people I was fired? Where should I eat? I'm hungry. Who should I call to tell them the news? My God, this drive is taking a long time. Wait! I'm still in the parking lot!*

*Should we sell the house? Oohh, I gotta tell the kids. This is embarrassing. Should I say I quit or retired?*

The thoughts keep on coming. Cascading, one over the other. A torrent of torment!

*Gotta save money. Let's see, get rid of this car, stop making so many charitable contributions. In fact, maybe I should quit all my charity activity. This is certainly not a reward for all my good deeds. Ah, feeling sorry for myself. Well, why shouldn't I? This is a sorry mess!*

I guess my mind decided it'd had enough input about the present. So, visions of the past started playing in my head.

*Remember how anxious I was when I went to Mankato for my first real radio audition? The manager of the station said, "Well, kid, you gotta start someplace." That was his way of saying I was hired. The months before that were so exciting as I fulfilled my high school dream of going to the radio school where brother Jim had been - and where he'd been so generous in letting me visit him. I thought my chance at radio school would never get here. Where the hell has the time gone? Oh, and the offer to move to the "big time", Salt Lake City, came the day Nila's dad died. Awkward timing. Unfortunate. I've only been driving a few minutes. I'm a long way from home. Let's see . . .*

*. . . following Fort Ord there was Dallas and Denver and then - L.A. - thirty-five years ago. 35 years! Damn, it's just too bad my triumvirate of bosses, all new to town, don't have some perspective on those years and respect for the career that they - just - ended! I wanted to do it, on my terms, some years in the distant future. Oh, and I need to write to my brother and sister. I have to tell the kids. God love our kids. What fun we all had last night at my birthday party. Wow! How quickly things change.*

An audible "huh"! A disbelieving shake of the head. Is this really happening?

*Al Lohman! The major player in those 35 years. Major! I should say so! He was probably my best teacher. I've been thinking about that for some time. Being with him for so many years, and with his love of show business, inquiring mind and college*

*education, I learned comedy techniques, literary references and a sense of confidence about my own ability to perform and be funny. Oh, yes, I learned a lot of what not to do, too. That partnership ended right about when it should have. Painful, but necessary.*

Where does a mind store all this stuff? How can it let it out and sort it out in spasms of mixed memories, current events and future uncertainties? Amazing - the mind . . .

*. . . when I get home I gotta write all of this down. As much as I enjoy writing I doubt that I can capture, on a page, the trauma, the stress! What it is to cope with a jumble of thoughts, each distinct. This is neuron overload. They're firing from every corner(?) of my mind.*

Home is getting closer now. Maybe I should first stop off and tell my restaurant partner, Jim Campbell, what just happened.

*And what about the restaurant business? I've been 6 years a restaurateur. Usually people spell restaurateur with an "n". Restauranteur. At a time like this, why am I concerned about how to spell restaura . . . Jeez . . . Jim and I have 10 of them. I haven't made much money from them, but I do get to eat free. That'll be comforting when my stomach growls, which it just did!.*

*As Jim's partner, I have a major obligation to our business relationship. He must be at the top of the list of people who need to know what happened today. Should I tell him I quit? He'd know that I wouldn't quit what I love. I'll call him from home.*

*Radio has been my life! How can I define myself from now on? Maybe I should become an on-site manager of one of the restaurants. No. As long as I've been involved, I don't have what it takes to manage. Jim has to be at the top of the list of people who need to know what happened today. I wonder how the station will announce this to the press?*

*As the word gets out, I know what people are going to think? "Isn't he lucky to have the restaurant business to fall back on?" The truth is, my restaurant business is not a "fall back on" proposition. Not yet. It will be in a few years. That's the way it was planned.*

*I figured I'd earned the right to one day call a halt to my radio career. My employer would say, "Oh, no, you're too valuable to leave us." I'd relent and agree to another couple of years. Then they'd reward me with a trip to Disney World. All the while that profitable restaurant business would be there to occupy me and augment my income.*

*Not to mention, provide warm, nourishing sustenance. All that would come once some major debt is paid. Oh, Lordy, Lordy! What about my debt? Ugly problem!*

*Now, thinking of sustenance, I realize, I'm no longer hungry. The delayed shock effect of getting fired is now registering on all non-vital organs of my body. Ooops, was that a pain in my chest? That's all I need today. A shut-down of a vital organ.*

*Gosh, 6 years I've been at KABC. My, oh, my! What an adventure it has been. Early mornings, late nights, world travels and cruises and ski trips. Best of all, a very good Ken and Barkley radio show! I wonder why Ken didn't tell me he was getting a new partner? Hmmm. It breaks my heart to have it end. 35 successful years in this town, the last 6 being like the pay-off prize for all that went before.*

*This really hurts! It's an actual physical pain in the gut that suddenly compounds the emotional hurt of what they did to me.*

*I became older two days ago and wiser 15 minutes ago. Wiser about corporate insensitivities. No warning from management. Can they do that? I didn't deserve this. I did my job for them with dependability . . . never missed a day; dignity and class ... proud of my contribution to the content of our program!*

*How can it be that this is the longest drive of my life? It's less than a half hour since I left that parking lot.*

*I know, there've been enough thoughts flashing in and out of my conscious, unconscious and semi-conscious mind to occupy a full day's drive to Reno.*

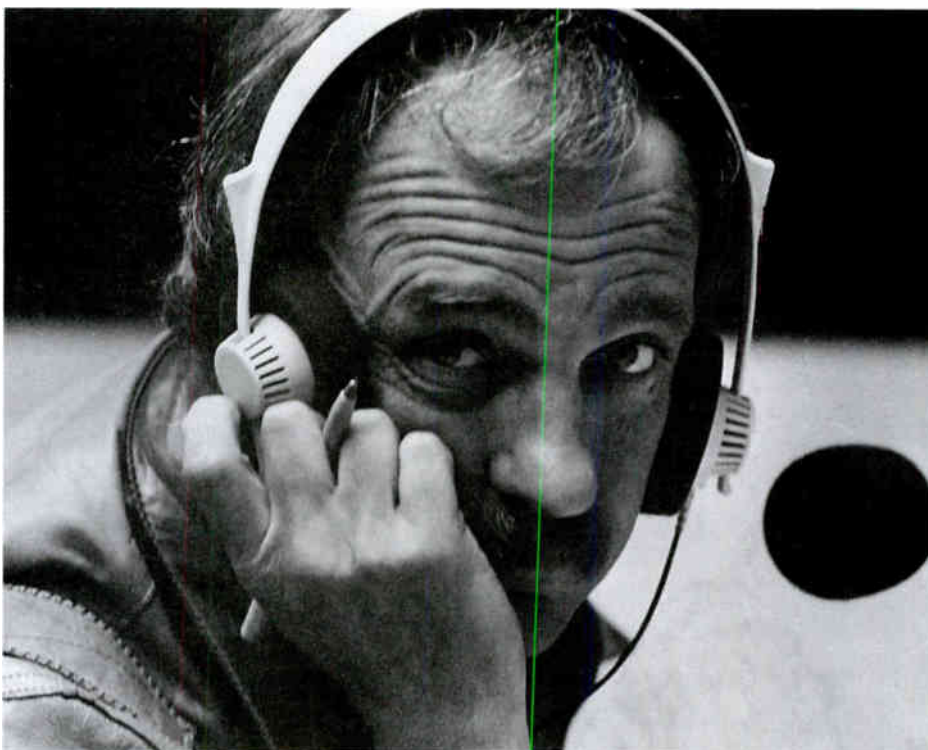
*And all that in only 25 minutes.*

*Reno? Where the hell did that come from?*

*Oh, well, I'm home at last.*

*Now what?!?*

***The Story Man***



*It's that time of year when the sounds we hear all seem to say..... "It's that time of year". Ah, the merry sounds of the season that make time's rapid passage almost palatable. Ready or not, it's here again. Christmas music and bells a-ringin'! Tiny bells that tinkle and belfry bells that ring out loud and clear. And then it's over. But wait. What's that I hear? There's still a-ringin' in my belfry. And it isn't Christmas - It's Tinnitus! Tin'utus (n): {L. past part. of tinnire to ring}: a ringing, roaring and hissing sensation in the ears"*

**Happy Holidays From  
The Story Man!  
But hold on a moment -  
My Other Ear Is Ringing**

This "ringing, roaring and hissing" in my ears was diagnosed as "classic tinnitus". It's "a high-frequency squeal", sometimes called, simply, "head noise". Kind of like having a dentist's drill whirring in the ears.

My "head noise" has probably been creeping up on me through my many years of having radio announcer earphones amplifying sounds into my auditory canal. Recent occurrences in my professional life have probably exacerbated the condition. They

say stress can do that. The stress of being fired probably ranks near the top of exacerbating occurrences. So, put them all together, plus the normal wear and tear of a noisy world, and I am left with dead, high-frequency-hearing nerves that now self-generate the high frequencies that they can no longer hear. Thus, a “ringing in the ears” has become a constant accompaniment to all other sounds.

My tinnitus is “subjective”. That is to say, only I hear it. I wish I could invite those who ask, “what does it sound like?”, to put their ears next to mine and listen to a sound similar, I should imagine, to that generated by a roomful of angry crickets.

If it were a head cold I’d take a pill, blow my nose, sneeze and wait for it to go away. A cold might leave a cough; but this is a cacophony (clever play on words) that cannot be relieved with pills nor ear-blowing. Based on present knowledge, it will never go away. It can be masked by more pleasant sounds, called “white noise”, which is what the actor, William Shatner, has resorted to for relief. He was quoted in People Magazine as being suicidal from the torment of his tinnitus.

While name-dropping, by the way, the next time I’m with Barbra Streisand, David Letterman and Steve Martin we can discuss our common malady. They each, to one degree or another, have “head noise”. I will share with them the possible complications beyond the private *heck* we endure. Like the story of my friend, a tinnitus sufferer, whose “ear doctor” prescribed a pill to “thin the blood”, thus increasing its circulation to the ears. It didn’t relieve his tinnitus at all, but now he can’t stop his nose from bleeding.



Understand, please, that The Story Man is not seeking your sympathy but, as a public service, alerting you to a condition that will become a common affliction in today's cacophonous world. The delicate nerves that respond to sound are being assaulted by an audio technology that prides itself on "loud"! We even have an over-amplification at so-called, "quiet affairs". Add rock concerts, jet engines, sirens and shoot-outs, and you can imagine the growth of membership in the American Tinnitus Association, Portland, Oregon.

Fortunately, at this point, the only time I have a problem hearing *normal conversation* is when I'm in a noisy room, or in a movie theatre with the soundtrack of a high-tech motion picture. It is the din of sounds that cause, not a loss of hearing, but an inability to isolate a specific conversation.

Thus, in those circumstances, I frequently find myself cupping my ear with the palm of my hand in order to literally funnel conversations into my ringing ears. By the way, I've also discovered that I should avoid bagpipers and accordion players. (In truth, I discovered that long before I had tinnitus.)

It was sometime this past spring that my "ear doctor" quickly diagnosed the laboratories' hearing tests. After his pronouncement of "Classic Tinnitus", I said, "I'd prefer 'Diet Tinnitus' .....and fries," Often, where humor is concerned, doctors are not the sharpest scalpel on the table.

Prior to that, for many months, I had suffered in silence. Correct that. I had suffered in private, but in a world that was hardly silent. It was a world of ringing, squealing and chirping. Being the strong, silent-type male person that I am, I had not told anyone of the annoyance and distraction that was my constant companion. (That is not a wife joke!)

I've always preferred that my discomforts not be of concern to them what loves me. (That is a wife reference). Now that I've gone public with this, I hope someone has an old-wives' cure. If not - - c'mon old wives, let's cure this thing.

We have new generations coming now with rock and rap pulsating deep into their middle ears. Their boom boxes are cranked to the point of pain. Then, too, there are rock concerts that you can hear 'cross town. Could this be the start of a campaign against the dangers of "second hand sound"? You gotta know we are in for a lot of future tinnitus sufferers. I'll call them, Tinnitians.

I find myself saying, "what?" and "huh?", more than I used to. I would hope, as the "head noise" plague spreads, and new "private *heck*" sufferers join our ranks, we'll

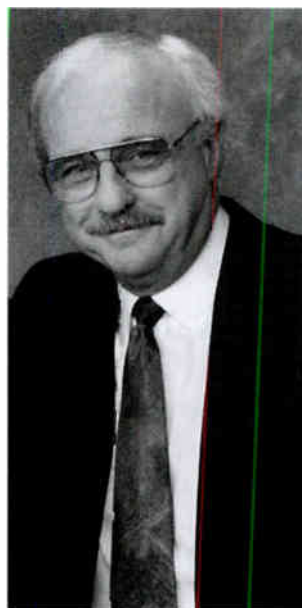


have the courtesy to say, “I beg your pardon?”. Soon we’ll just point to our ears and say, “tinnitus”. We’ll read their lips as they say, “me too”.

So that’s my attempt at making lemonade out of lemons. Or, more in keeping with the spirit of the season, an attempt at making “sweet rum nog” out of less-than-fresh eggs.

As my ears prepare to ring in the New Year, I wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season! May the ringing you hear be only the bells that tinkle and chime Merry Christmas to all! And to all: A Good Night’s.....Sleep!

*The Story Man*



*For as many years as Roger Barkley and his family have lived in La Cañada Flintridge, that's 28 Christmases, members of the media have been after him to sit down and answer a variety of questions. Until now, he's refused. Recently, there have been even more requests because his name's been in the news with his sudden departure from KABC radio and the highly successful "Ken and Barkley Company". Finally, he's relented.*

**The Story Man  
Gets An Exclusive Interview With  
Roger Barkley**

*Story Man: Thank you for finally agreeing to a conversation with me for this holiday issue of the **La Cañada Flintridge Magazine**.*

**Roger Barkley: You're welcome. I think.**

*S.M.: Why have you refused to sit down and answer questions all these years?*

**R.B.: I wanted to stand up!**

*S.M.: You are. Therefore, so too am I. There are many questions that I'm sure our*

*readers will be interested in your response to.*

**Roger Barkley:** Do you want to re-word that statement? You left a preposition dangling.

*S.M.: Seriously, is there some reason why you have been hesitant about being interviewed?*

**R.B.:** Because I learned long ago that I don't answer questions too good.

*S.M.: Do you want to re-word your answer? You left an adjective dangling.*

**R.B.:** I'm more comfortable as an interviewerer than as an intervieweeee.

*S.M.: Of all the people you've interviewed on radio and television through the years, do you have any really memorable ones?*

**R.B.:** One that stands out was my very first interview as a professional radio announcer. I was 18 years old and assigned to do a "live" broadcast from the National Guard Armory in Mankato, Minnesota. I interviewed the Colonel in-charge and, before the interview was over, I joined the National Guard. It was to be a four-year hitch. Three years into it, I was called to active duty during a cold war crisis somewhere in the world. They sent me to Fort Ord for your basic military training, and then they kept changing the rules, so I ended up spending a total of ten years in various reserve units, depending on where my work took me.

*S.M.: And your radio work took you to a lot of places in those early years.*

**R.B.:** In fact, I was in Salt Lake City when that Reserve unit was activated. That's why I was sent to Fort Ord, here in California, rather than to some Midwestern army base. It was my first visit to this state and I vowed to return someday, as a civilian. Two years later, here I was.

*S.M.: And now you have no radio work.*

**R.B.:** Darn you, Story Man, I knew you'd get around to that. I just knew you'd want to get me to talk about being fired by KABC! Shame on you!

*S.M.: Well, speaking for many of us, it was disheartening to learn that you were, shall we say, "dismissed"?*

**R.B.:** (interrupting) Fired! Friday the 13th, September, 1996. Ah yes, I remember it well.

*S.M.: And without warning. Why?*

**R.B.:** That is the question! My bosses said that the “younger listener ratings” on our “*Ken and Barkley Company*” radio program were “heading south”. In this instance, I don’t think “heading south” was a reference to San Diego. Ratings, like the stock market, ebb and flow. We were in a bit of an “ebb” stage, I guess. However, the most recent ratings, according to the newspapers, showed us back in “flow” motion.

*S.M.: I know you’ve done a lot of performing for charitable causes. In fact, your golf tournament, next April 18, raises funds for your own Foundation. Does an indignity like this affect your enthusiasm for continuing those charitable efforts?*

**R.B.:** It knocked the wind out of me and made me wonder if I should “hang it up” all together. Whatever “it” is. But after some oxygen and a few minutes on the sideline, I was ready to get back into the game of life. You like that metaphor?

*S.M.: Nice analogy. So you took the ball and threw yourself into your restaurant business.*

**R.B.:** Nice try. Actually, in the weeks immediately following my being dismissed....

*S.M.: (interrupting) Fired!!*

**R.B. ....**I didn’t visit the restaurants as much as I had in the past. I kinda went into hiding for awhile. It’s embarrassing to be my age and get fired. It’s like it took somebody 42 years, that’s how long it’s been since I interviewed the Colonel and joined the Reserves, to finally expose to the public that I wasn’t good enough at it to keep my job.

*S.M.: I feel your pain.*

**R.B.:** I’m not surprised. You know, Story Man, being fired, unexpectedly from a job, is like dying prematurely on the job. No chance for good-byes or a company-sponsored farewell. Today, I find myself “broadcast-challenged”.

*S.M.: Interesting parallel - personal death and professional extinction.*

**R.B.:** I don't know that it's nice to call me "professionally extinct", just yet. You see now, answering stuff like this is why I didn't want to do this interview.

*S.M.: You're doing good..er...ah...fine!*

**R.B.:** But, you asked about the restaurants. I'm lucky to have Jim Campbell as my partner and mentor. I'll have more time now to concentrate on participating in that business, and I won't quit until "The Barkley" is an international chain of restaurants. Likewise, the "Flintridge Inn", "Barney's L.T.D. and Brewery" and "Los Gringos Locos"!

*S.M.: Clever, the way you worked those names in.*

**R.B.:** Thank you. Now, may I take this opportunity also, to thank those hundreds and hundreds; over a thousand radio fans, actually; who wrote me such lovely, kind, thoughtful and caring cards and letters. It's amazing how much a part of the family a morning radio guy can become.

*S.M.: Are you going to get back on the air?*

**R.B.:** Darned if I know. If I am, I'd better hurry before people forget who I was..who I am..who am I? Good heavens! I've already forgotten.

*S.M.: We'll never forget.*

**R.B.:** That's what they all said about what's-his-name.

*S.M.: Who's that?*

**R.B.:** I forget.

*S.M.: I know you enjoy writing. Do you plan to concentrate more time on that?*

**R.B.:** Writing has long been a hobby. I guess it runs in the blood. My Mother loved to write.

*S.M.: What about a book?*

**R.B.:** It's written. It's called "...Maybe someday!" Kind of an unauthorized autobiography. It's grown to 7 volumes now. Volume I is the story of my youth and my 25-year broadcast association with Al Lohman. The additional "volumes" are a

**journal of events as they unfold in my life.**

*S.M.: I take it Volume VII has to do with your dismissal...*

**R.B.: (interrupting) I was fired.**

*S.M.: ...by KABC.*

**R.B.: The current volume, No. VII, in progress, is entitled, “...Maybe, someday...ad nauseam”. A lot of it has to do with the immediate emotions one goes through when unexpectedly fired, and the layering-on of additional emotions as time passes.**

*S.M.: How many are “layered” by now?*

**R.B.: However many emotions man has are in a jumbled mass, or mess, in my mind. I think writing about it, and the other momentous events in my life, and my families’ life, is very therapeutic for me. The word is, cathartic, I think. It’s purifying. And it helps me organize my thoughts. And life. And desk. And garage. And...**

*S.M.: (interrupting)...where the next Barkley Restaurant will be located??*

**R.B.: Precisely. Is this about over?**

*S.M.: Yes it is, and thank you. I hope my readers have enjoyed this exclusive interview and that my colleagues in the press are eating their hearts out.*

**R.B.: If your readers are still with us, I’d like to take a moment to say, “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year” to all you dear folks who peruse the pages of this lovely, interesting and informative magazine.**

*S.M.: Me too. And I’d like to congratulate the Publisher, Tina Marie Ito, for having put together a magazine of which we can all be proud.*

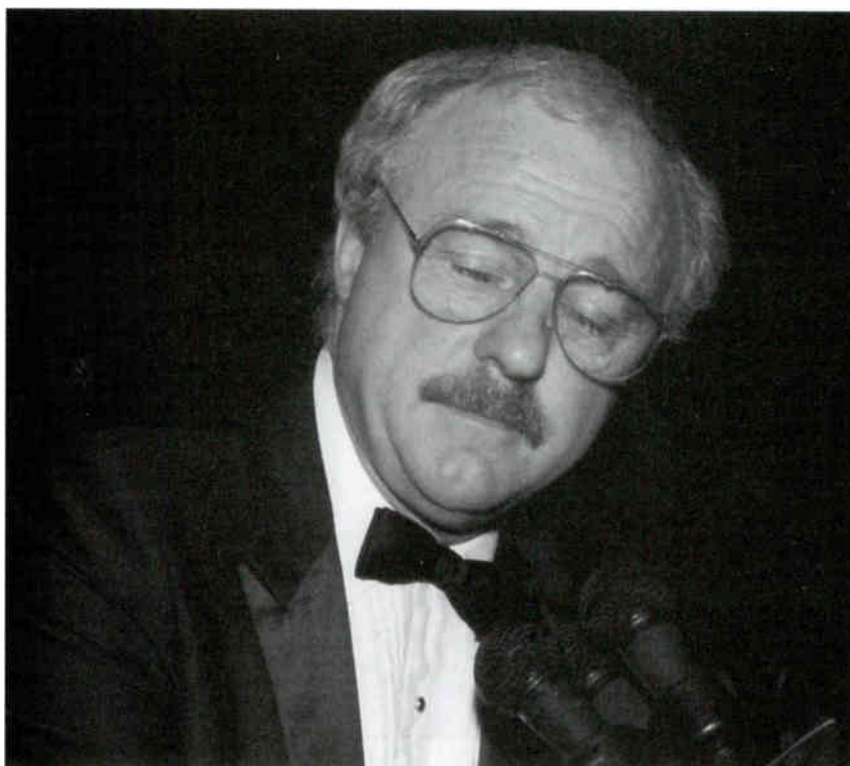
**R.B.: Me too. A well-deserved compliment for the quality of Ms. Ito’s hard work.**

*S.M.: And with that, Roger, you’re dismissed.*

**R.B.: Oh, oh! Where did I hear that before?**

*The Story Man*





*Everyone has had an opportunity to give thought to, and express opinions about, Princess Diana's tragic death. Why in the world did the people of the world react as they did? The multitudes have been waiting to find out what*

### **The Story Man Thinks!**

All of us - and I mean all of us from everywhere in this world - who've lived enough years, have grieved for those we love when "something happens to them". (I've had too many lunches with my insurance agent.) The grieving is even more pronounced for those we lose prematurely. The old burying the young. That's unnatural and painful beyond nature's intentions. But, when it happens we grieve with family and friends. And then, as it must, life moves on.

When the lovely, and seemingly charmed Diana, was lost to us, it became an opportunity for the world to share in public, what so many have had to endure in private. It was as if the citizens of the world gave a knowing wink to each other with an international flower- adorned public display of understanding for what so many have had to endure in our own private ways. Usually, in death, no one knows, and so no one cares beyond those who've had a personal relationship with those who are left alone to mourn.

Just as a motion picture, about which you don't know the outcome, is better enjoyed in the company of others, and an athletic event that will end with the expiration of a clock or a strikeout is more exciting with others who cheer, so too is a death that is unexpected and instant. The world became united in appreciation of each other's having had to live privately with tragedy.

She was the Mother, Diana. Beautiful, troubled, complex and oh, so human. She became every person's focus of a knowing and shared grief.

*With her death the world could come together to mourn in a universality of human understanding of unexpected losses. Usually, we grieve in small numbers, in private. There is no way that we can mourn for everyone who suffers a tragic loss, but we can universally mourn for someone lost, who has known triumph and tragedy on a grander scale than the rest of us. It's our "knowing wink" to each other that in our own lives we've been there and we understand and want to share the pain.*

***The Story Man***



*What if, for one reason or another, this was the last writes of the Story Man? To this point there have been Story Man columns covering a variety of subjects and observations and personal interests that have ranged from serious to sad to silly. What would I want to say if this were to be the end of it? Think about that as an exercise for yourself, too. How would you summarize your thoughts, express your opinions, offer your advice if you had but one final opportunity to do so? Well, let's see what it would be if this were....*

### **The Story Man's Last Writes**

It begins with an examination of the most important element in the structure and survival of humanity; the family: "the basic biosocial unit in society". "Biosocial": derived from "biology": "the science of life" and "social": "cooperative and interdependent relationships".

I was lucky to come from a functional family. Mother, Father, Brother and Sister. As a child, over a period of years, we had many chickens, several goats, 2 dogs and a few cats. My luck continued when I met and married a young lady who brought her functional family experience to our own home, where we too have had dogs and a few cats, but no chickens or goats. We pooled our luck and have functioned as a family

now for 40 years. Congratulations to us! And love to my functional wife, Nila!! Thank you for being responsible and dedicated to the basic rearing of two functioning kids, Chris and Angela, both of whom are in the functional family mode themselves. I'll say we're lucky!

In recent years, the value of "family" has been maliciously belittled by a symbiotic combination of forces, each feeding on and energizing the other. It's fashionable now, and maybe too late, to appeal to the entertainment industry for programs that are morally elevating and instructive in "family values". How did the studios, for so many years, make movies without blood, guts, nudity and profanity?



What Hollywood has wrought is a technology that has desensitized us to the reality of the brutality that today is an acceptable form of family entertainment.

Regular moviegoers have been made indifferent and even unaware of the outrageous profanity that permeates the language in "family" motion pictures. Many of the images of violence and sex are hardly the kind of reinforcement of positive "cooperative relationships" that are the backbone of a stable society.

Couple that with an attitude that mutual *interdependence* is unnecessary because the practitioners of progressive politics have made us tolerant of individuals who fail to take responsibility for those who are dependent upon them.

In fact, misguided government welfare programs have replaced the dignity of competitive breadwinning with a new sport, bred-winning. Now, the more you breed the more bread for the bred, with the breeder taking no responsibility for what he bred. We have an ever-growing class of single or abandoned mothers who can survive only with Uncle Sam in the role of Father.

Sadly, our children, too often, have become afterthoughts in the selfish pursuits of parents, mostly the male ones, whose priorities are personal pleasures rather than the recognition of the responsibility that goes with fathering a child. Children are called “dependents” for a reason. Those little people *depend* on their Moms and Dads for stability and security.

In the broader definition, families extend beyond individual residences, too. A group of people bound together by religious or political convictions; a body of employees; an organization of volunteers; persons of common ancestry. These become the larger family and each is a rung in the ladder that, at the top, contributes, ultimately, to a proud, vital, competitive and successful society.

If our time on this planet is spent building strong households and extended civil families that make a positive contribution to humanity, then it is time well spent. Columnist George Will wrote: “An obsession with longevity distracts us from our duty to live well”. Living well means knowing the satisfaction of honest achievement and the joy of loving and being loved.

As my own Mother wrote, “Live each moment to the fullest for that is all you have”. Living full means living for others “....*to console*;....*to understand*;....*to love*;....*to give*....*and*....*to pardon*.” That’s my “Reader’s Digest” version of the Prayer of St. Francis.

Another reason to live well and full is the sobering reality of the words of the surgeon, Sherwin Nuland, author of “How We Die: Reflections on Life’s Final Chapter”. “Medicine has a job to do, but nature does too and will do it, medicine be damned. Nature’s job is to send us packing so that subsequent generations can flourish.”

“*Flourish*”: “*increase in wealth, honor, comfort, happiness, or whatever is desirable*”. If, indeed, we want subsequent generations to “flourish”, then those over whom we have influence must learn by our public example to keep trying and doing their best. In America, sadly, there are those who have less chance because the example of honest effort is missing. A functional family starts at the top with love, respect, discipline and sharing.

**Love:** “affection and tenderness”

**Respect:** “high or special regard”

**Discipline:** “behavior in accordance with the rules”

**Sharing:** “enjoying with others”

Those are not only fundamentals for families, but are the ingredients that will strengthen any relationship, be it personal or professional.



While we work at putting the family first, let's next take a vital step toward the education of the children who come from that "basic biosocial unit". If I authored a contract with America it would contain one word. Education! Education! which itself



PHOTO BY LAURIE BALMER

must be family-friendly and instructive in ways to be responsible parents.

I would propose that teachers be our heroes and that a monument be built in Washington D.C. honoring America's teachers. I would encourage school districts to adopt student uniforms. I would convene the very best of America's educators to share their experiences and knowledge about ways to prepare our young for the challenges of a future in which they must live and compete, ultimately to *flourish*?!

I would suggest that all young people, upon graduation from high school, or at age 18, and for 18 months thereafter, be required to serve in the military or some other service to the country. All who are physically able would take the same kind of basic training that is required of the military. The discipline and contribution of time, in service to the country, will make for a greater appreciation of the opportunities to *flourish* that America offers. And you can bet there'd be a lot of flourishing by many who otherwise never would have known the joy that comes with pride in self, family and country!

My own active military service was only six and a half months, that interrupted a career in progress, with many years of reserve duty that followed, but those few months were definitely a defining time in my young life. With longer service and a desire to take advantage of opportunities to learn, future generations would further improve their education and ability to compete in a high-tech, cyber-space world!

*The Story Man*





**How The Story Man  
Guides Us  
Through Life and Passing**

Being the *story family* of the Story Man, we were blessed with love and joy, lessons of life, moments of splendor and frugality and most of all, laughter. The Story Man was gifted in teaching us all of life's lessons with pointed sincerity and most of all humor. He always found a way to make everyone smile no matter how hard the lesson at hand really was. Through our lives as the *story kids*, there were constant themes our *story Dad* stuck to and never wavered. Through his modest and unpretentious life, he'd tell us stories so that we, as young people, would value the things he felt most important and what he had himself learned from his Ma and Pa. "Work hard at whatever you do and in the end you will be happy...save your pennies 'cause some day you are going to need them. Cherish the family!!!! You don't have to always like each other, but let each other know you love each other no matter what. Never forget in each of life's gifts that we as a family have been blessed by good fortune and good health."

*Ms. Story Man* and the rest of the *story family* have struggled with the loss of our much loved *story Dad*. He was truly the most wonderful Husband, Dad, and Papa anyone could ask for. We all wondered together how we were going to get through without him. During a very difficult day of funeral planning at Forest Lawn, we realized



that Dad was there with us, still teaching us his lessons-even in passing.

The Story Man didn't tell us much about his wishes for after his passing. Maybe he didn't have enough time or perhaps he figured once he was gone it didn't much matter as long as we were happy. The only thing we knew was that Dad wished to be cremated-probably because he would view being buried as an awfully big waste of space. So *the story family* pressed on through the planning unaware of the incredible multitude of details involved in this event. After we had made it through the paperwork and basic details of planning the memorial, our mortality guide calmly, in the tone of voice only a person who works at a mortuary speaks in, told us that we would now need to select the packaging for Dad's cremation and after. We all looked at each other with the "Oh God, here we go" expression. We were escorted to a large room displaying ornate caskets with varying silk linings most of which were exorbitant in price. Together we looked, seeing nothing that came even close to befitting for Dad. Those were all so pretentious and gaudy. Then we spotted a simple gray one over in the corner. Gray was, after all, Dad's favorite color. As we all approached it together thinking- simple, Dad would like this, we spotted a ramshackle cardboard box shoved underneath with a price tag of \$39.95. It was as if Dad was calling to all of us. "Hey guys, over here, this one's not bad." We all started laughing. *Ms. Story Man* said out loud, "Dad you've got to be kidding- this is just an oversized UPS box. Well kids, we're not going to listen to him this time. Sorry Dad." This simple gray casket would do just fine. With our Story Man there with us, we felt his sense of humor take over. We all began to joke and laugh about the UPS Casket. We were certain our somber mortality guide had thought we were all nuts.

We were then told that it was time to identify the body but, first we were shown a selection of clothing in a window display, in case we did not know what we wanted Dad dressed in for his final departure. Still feeling Dad with us we laughed and said the pink ladies dress would be just fine. Seeing our guide's jaw on the floor, *story brother* says "just kidding . . . Dad's favorite color was gray. Do you have anything in gray?" This time our guide realized we were filling this difficult moment with humor as Story Dad taught us, and he smiled too.

Our final stop, verifying that Dad was indeed, Dad. We were guided into a large elevator to take the trip to see Dad this last time. We all felt shaky and uncertain now much like the first time you go into the elevator in "The Haunted House Ride" at Disneyland. We entered the room. His peaceful expression made it easy for us *story kids*, but *Ms. Story Man* was a little shaky and needed to leave. We kids joined Mom outside the room and she let us know she was okay. Our guide said, "He looks good." Then Dad must have started walking with Ms. Story Man, because she ribbed our guide and said "He looks great, but who in the hell was that man?" Our guide stopped in his tracks fearing some horrible mistake had occurred before realizing the Barkley family was joking again. Without Dad being with us to guide us with humor, we would have struggled through this day even more. We were grateful the Story Man chose to help us.

The Story Man lived his life with the values taught to him by his Mom and Dad in Odebolt, Iowa. Gentleness, kindness, sincerity, respect, hard work, integrity and humor: these are the qualities that were our Story Man's character. Without needing to be told, Dad let us know he wanted his final resting place to be in Odebolt, his home, with his Mom and Dad, where he learned to be the incredible Story Man that he was.

We will miss your stories.

"Only one thing endures: Character."

Horace Greeley

*The Story Daughter*

## *A LETTER TO A VERY SPECIAL MAN*

*Dear Dad,*

*Although I can't see you, I know you can see me and though I can't hear you, I know you can hear me. As you look down on me now.. hear how you have touched me.*

*You are to me an example of grace and all things good in our human race. Through our short battle with your illness and in struggles through what were some very difficult times for our family during the past year...you have shown me that there is no situation so horrible that one must fall from the personal state of grace inside ourselves. You have shown that it is through the hard times that we truly learn to cherish the special ones and that it is how we each choose to handle those difficult times that builds our soul and spirit.*

*Yours now soars like the eagles you loved so much.*

*You have taught me much during our time together but you never did tell me, how do I let go of the man I treasure above all else?*

*That lesson was taught to me by my four year old son. Driving home from the hospital one night with Jared, I was crying. Jared asked me "Mommy, why are you sad?" I explained that Papa had a tummy ache and that maybe only the angels could help his hurting go away. He then asked "Can Papa come back after the angels fix him?" I explained that once you go to the angels you can never come back. Jared then said to me "Mommy, I know you'll be sad if Papa goes to live with the angels, but shouldn't we let him go if that's where he won't hurt anymore? He's in our hearts." I told Jared that he was absolutely right.*

*Grief is only the temporary adjustment to not being able to see the ones we love. Jared's Papa, my Dad . . . will live forever in my heart. We only need to let go of the grief to cherish the memories as sweet instead of bitter sweet.*

*Dad I love you. I feel you in me and I will cherish life's lessons. I only hope that I can maintain the love, kindness, dignity and grace you have shown us all by the example of your life.*

*Au Revoir Pas Adieu  
Angela*

*This book was completed as a labor of love for Roger Barkley.*

*We are so proud to publish these stories  
which he had thoughtfully and attentively written  
over the past five years.*

*Thank you, Roger, for inviting us to share in this part of your life.*

*Tina Marie Ito  
Laurie Balmer  
Jo Ann Cole*

*Portions of this work were originally published in the  
Flintridge Shopper and/or The La Cañada Flintridge Magazine*

Grateful acknowledgment to those  
who authorized our use of the photographs  
and illustrations included within this book.









*He's "The Story Man" everyone knows*

*Our friend who is gifted with prose*

*He's warmhearted and kind*

*A sweeter man you won't find*

*He spreads goodness wherever he goes.*

*— Tina Marie Ito*